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1949

Vol. CCXVI  
No. 5656

For conditions of sale and supply of Punch  
see bottom of last page of text



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MADE IN  
GREAT BRITAIN

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# The Earnest Sweater . . .



*He thinks that perspiration is  
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But it's his rustic underclothes  
That cause his brow to drip.*

*The Wolsey type is just as tough  
But he is more æsthetic,  
He shows his form in lightest wool,  
Well-tailored and athletic.*

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Wolsey Ltd., Leicester

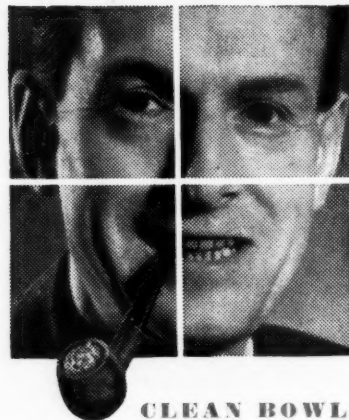
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Four Square is a clean smoke—and a great saver. Every pipeful burns cool and sweet to the last shred, leaving a clean bowl with no wasteful dottle. It pays to smoke Four Square! Six blends—foil-wrapped for freshness.

4/1½ oz.

Cut Cake (Yellow)

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cost  
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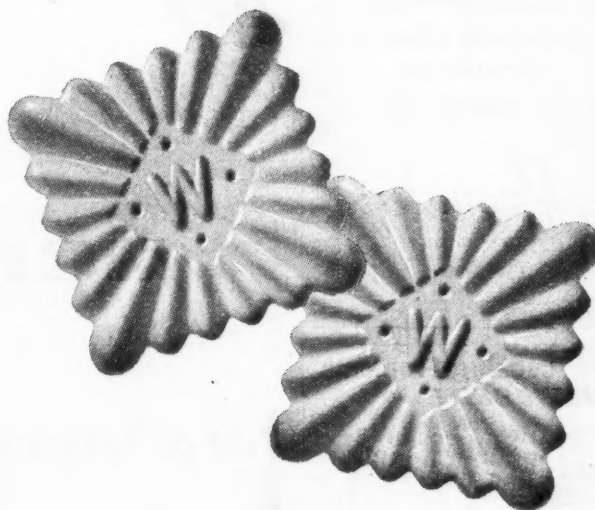


When they're feeling 'Peckish'  
think of **PECK'S**  
meat and fish pastes



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## Short-eating, sweet, tempting! Weston's Dainty Fare




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TO H.M. KING GEORGE VI



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The craftsmanship  
of over half a century  
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For all summer long, choose**

**pure silk crepe-de-chine  
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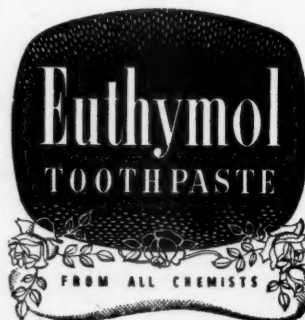
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it's the **NEW Eugène** ROOT-AND-POINT WAVE

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DIAMONDS, EMERALDS, SAPPHIRES  
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FISHING TACKLE  
... a name to angle with !  
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The actual cutting blade touches the skin just like a razor blade—unlike other dryshavers there is no intervening guard to prevent a really close shave—that's the skin-close shaving secret of the Rabaldo. And there's no new technique to learn—just plug in and use at the normal 'safety' razor angle for a really speedy, close and comfortable shave without the bother of soap, water, brush, creams or lotions.  
Guaranteed 12 months. First-class 24-Hours Servicing Dept.

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**THE PERFECT DRYSHAVER**

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SUMMER  
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AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE USE  
IN THREE MODELS

A - White Nubuck blending with Brown Calf  
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*The most distinguished name in Travel Goods*

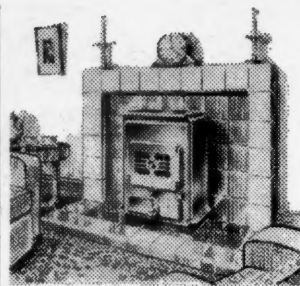
ANTLER Leather Suitcases are now generally obtainable from your usual ANTLER dealer. Made from top-grain hide and finished with the traditional ANTLER workmanship, these fine cases will last a lifetime.

Available in a delightful Golden Tan shade.

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*Fit a*  
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many  
imitations



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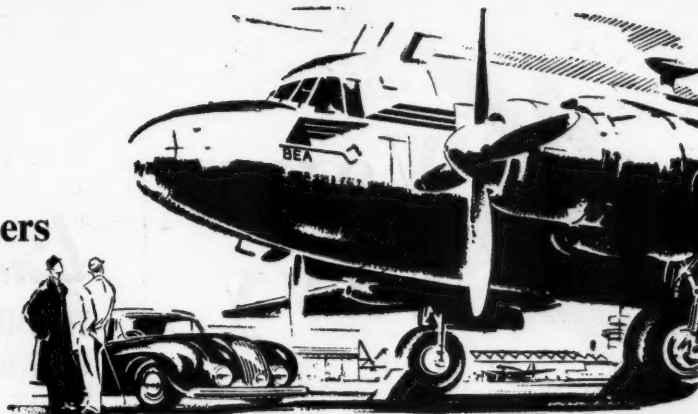
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ONLY from:

**CHARLES  
RATTRAY**  
Tobacco Biender  
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Price 7s. 6d. per lb., Post Paid. Send 10/- for sample quarter-lb. tin, Post Free

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use SHELL OIL, too?"**



**T**HE VICKERS VIKING aircraft, Britain's most modern twin-engined airliners, specially designed to meet the needs of post-war civil aviation, are now operating on all B.E.A. Continental routes. Their engines are lubricated exclusively with Shell Oil. The Shell Research

Centre at Thornton in Cheshire is the biggest institution of its kind in Britain and one of the best equipped in the world. *That's why Shell Oil means longer life and smoother performance for YOUR car, too. Your dealer knows—see him frequently.*



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The **majority**  
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Fine Cars and  
Commercial  
Vehicles are  
Fitted with

**BRAKES  
DAMPERS  
CHASSIS-  
LUBRICATION**

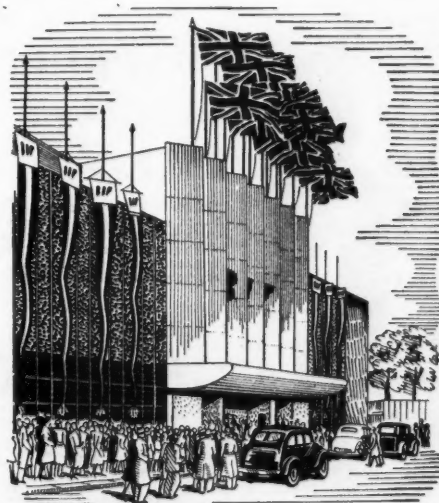
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THE BEST BRAKES IN THE WORLD

\* Maintain the Factory standard of efficiency by always insisting on a Genuine Girling Spare. There's a Girling Service Agent in Your District, ask him for details of the Damper Replacement Service, also for genuine Factory Lined Replacement Shoes.

*THERE'S AN AUTHORISED  
GIRLING SERVICE AGENT  
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**GIRLING LIMITED  
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ONCE A YEAR British Industry holds a great "At home" to all its customers and friends. This is the famous British Industries Fair to which come buyers from all parts of the world, seeking a vast variety of goods and services.

The Fair does much to stimulate that export trade by which Great Britain chiefly lives, and Barclays

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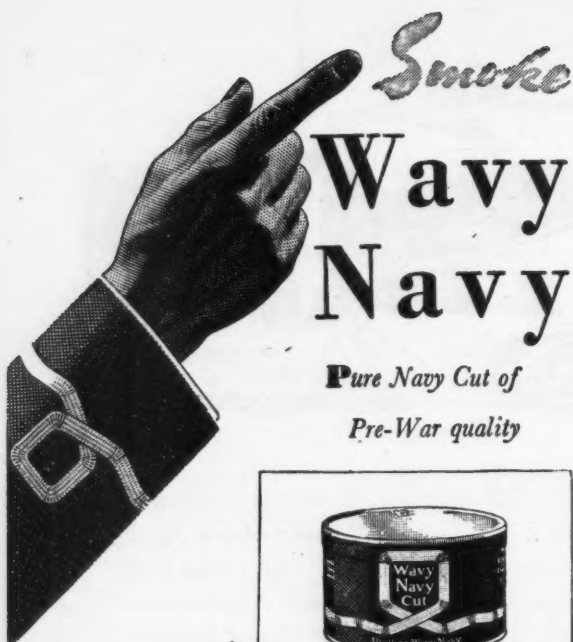
Business men entering the export trade for the first time are particularly invited to discuss any financial problems with the Manager of their local branch, or to write direct to the address given below:

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GODFREY PHILLIPS LTD  
MANUFACTURERS  
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2 OZ. AIRTIGHT TIN 8/10  
1 OZ. FOILED PACKET 4/5

Also ready rubbed

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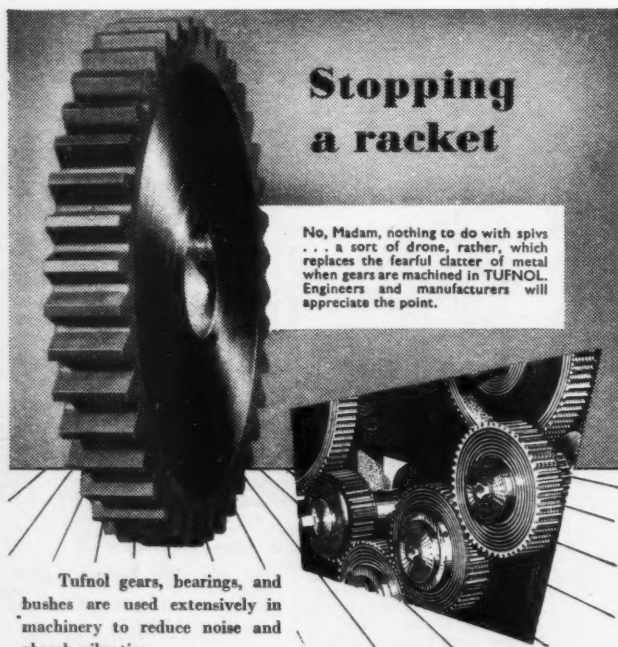
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a pen for your thoughts



Tufnol gears, bearings, and bushes are used extensively in machinery to reduce noise and absorb vibration.

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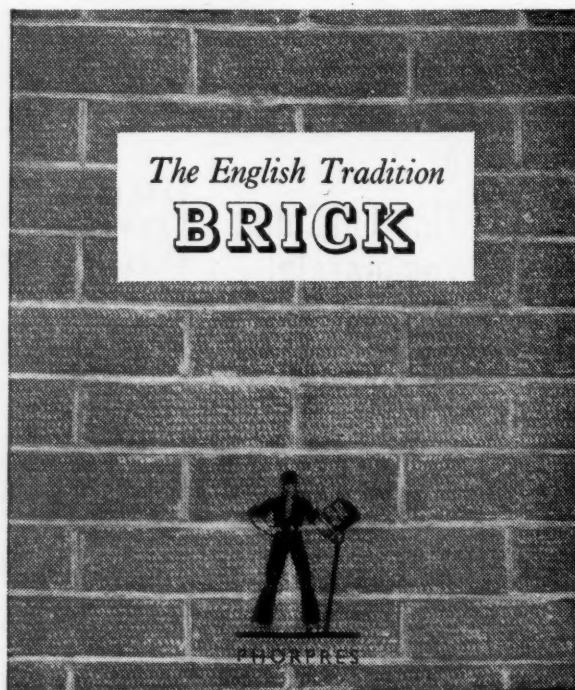
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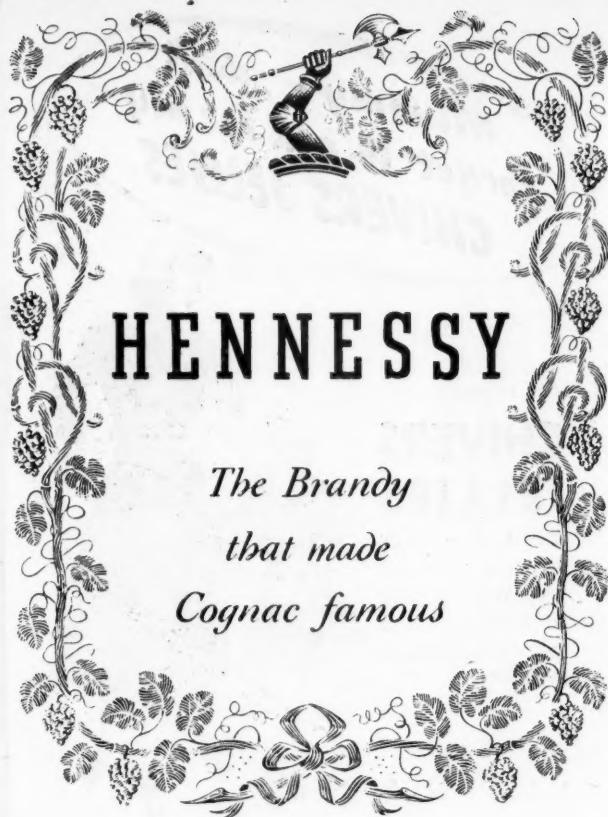
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The largest Brickmakers in the world



## The Tied House System

Nearly twenty years ago, the Royal Commission on Licensing found that under a good and careful brewer the 'tied house' system operated advantageously and produced excellent results.

Under this system, the English inn has grown in usefulness and good repute as a centre of social life. The brewer has been able to avoid waste in production and distribution with much benefit to the customer, and to supply beer in fine condition. Mine host has remained as master in his own house, even if it be one which he could not afford to buy and for which he pays a low or merely nominal rent.

The system has not restricted the customer's choice of beer. Customers are generally able to choose between the 'tied house' of one brewer and another, and hence between their beers. There are more than 2,000 different beers now being brewed by the 500 or 600 brewing firms in the country, and each of them finds its way into some of our inns.



# ROLLS-ROYCE

THE BEST CAR IN THE WORLD

"It is scarcely necessary to add that the detail realisation shews no departure from those standards of excellence which have become proverbial throughout the world."

—The Motor

ROLLS-ROYCE LIMITED, 14-15, CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W.1.



Children look their best  
in 'Dayella'

IF IT SHRINKS  WE REPLACE

The Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association will be delighted to have any 'Dayella' clothes that your children may have outgrown.

WILLIAM HOLLINS & COMPANY LIMITED, VIVELLA HOUSE, NOTTINGHAM  
Spinners, Weavers and Sole Manufacturers of  
'VIVELLA', 'DAYELLA' and 'CLYDELLA'  
BRANCHES, AGENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD  
D4

Mummy - don't  
forget to ask for my  
CHIVERS JELLIES

We regret

**CHIVERS  
JELLIES**

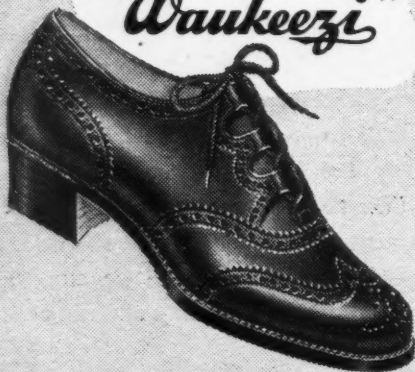
are still rather  
scarce. Please  
help your grocer  
to reserve them  
for children and  
invalids.



Chivers & Sons Ltd.  
The Orchard Factory  
Histon · Cambridge

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WEAR "Waukeezi"



"DORETTE"—A strong, welted Ghillie type Brogue shoe in Calf leather with hidden tongue. Made for heavy duty and to give utmost comfort and security.

If this model is out of stock there will be other WAUKEEZI styles at your Agents.



...YOUR SHOE SYMBOL

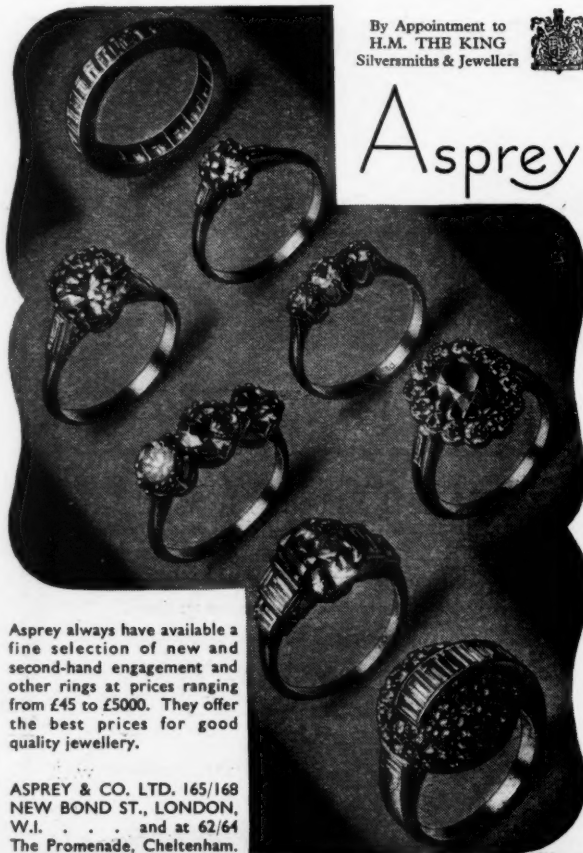
THE WAUKEEZI SHOE CO. LTD., NORTHAMPTON

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By Appointment to  
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Silversmiths & Jewellers



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Asprey always have available a fine selection of new and second-hand engagement and other rings at prices ranging from £45 to £5000. They offer the best prices for good quality jewellery.

ASPREY & CO. LTD. 165/168  
NEW BOND ST., LONDON,  
W.1. . . . and at 62/64  
The Promenade, Cheltenham.





*crispy... crunchy...*



**Vita-Weat**

by PEEK FREAN

By Appointment  
Peek Frean & Co., Ltd.  
Biscuit & Vita-Weat  
Crispbread Manufacturers

Those crunchy, golden-brown slices of Vita-Weat not only look good and taste good—they do you good. They're packed with the goodness of the whole-wheat grain.



*My word...  
MERIDIAN!*



UNDERWEAR  
SLUMBERWEAR  
KNITWEAR

J. B. LEWIS & SONS, LTD., Nottingham. Est. 1815. Suppliers to the Wholesale Trade

## TAX FREE

The new Toledo model



## For this Relief

We know you have been longing for the comfort of Parker-Knoll springing, and we have fretted at the controls which prevented us giving it to you. At last there is some relief. We are now able to make an elbow chair in light metal, fitted with our standard Parker-Knoll, covered, tension springs in seat and back. There will not be a lot of them but if you act quickly you may get one. Try the best furniture store near you.

**PARKER-KNOLL LTD**

TEMPLE END, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS

CVS-21



*Give  
your shoes  
a good  
polish*

Never let your shoes suffer for want of a good polish. Make a habit of giving them their daily shine with 'Nugget'. It only takes a moment, keeps them brilliant all day and gives a leather-preserving finish which makes shoes last far longer.

**NUGGET  
BOOT POLISH**

Black, Brown and Dark Brown. Tins 4d. & 8d.

N/03 SUPREME FOR QUALITY



Vol. CCXVI No. 5656

May 4 1949

## Charivaria

Now that newspapers are larger we shall be able to swat flies this summer instead of just fanning them.

"London playgoers are kittle cattle," says a critic. And now sweets are unrationed there is even more champing in the stalls.

There is continued Kremlin criticism of the Atlantic Pact. The chief objection is that it prevents Russia declaring peace on the Western nations one at a time.

One London night-club has a conjurer as its star turn. His chief illusion is to make an assistant disappear into thick air.



Oh!  
"MORE SOBRIETY  
IN WREXHAM  
19 cases last year"  
"Liverpool Daily Post"

The British housewife can change her meat supplier if, for any reason, she is dissatisfied—which is apparently more than the Ministry of Food can do.

A man who won £20,000 in a football pool said that his first extravagance would be to get his name put on the waiting-list for telephones.

Now that Eire has snapped the last link with this country Irish tenors exiled in British radio are expected to become more nostalgic than ever.



Hollywood has bought the screen rights of a book that has not yet been written. Studio production has started and the author attends daily to get ideas for the novel of the film.

A new bicycle is powered by a motor fixed over the front wheel. This enables the rider to detect backfiring instantly.

"French and English conversational lessons given by English lady speaking Greek and Italian."

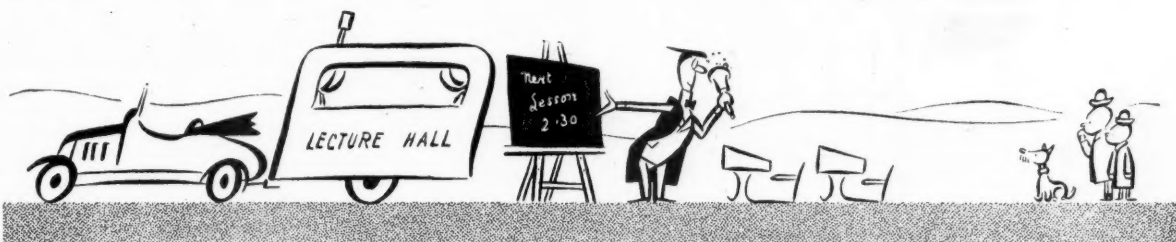
"The Herts. Advertiser and St. Albans Times"  
It's just a gift.

"No fewer than 633 cyclists with their machines left on the s.s. Shanklin from Ryde Pier at 9.45 A.M. on Monday, and the vessel certainly had an unusual appearance as she left the pier with this astronomical number of machines on deck."

"The Isle of Wight County Press"  
Not our star reporter, perhaps.

Railway time-tables are dearer. Holidays, like everything else, are proving more expensive in the planning stage.

A town councillor suggests a mobile schoolroom and teacher to tour scattered districts. Children are expected to protest against schools following them about.





## A Word to the Traveller

I HAVE never said anything about it before because I have hardly liked to. I always felt that you had as much right there as I and that, therefore, you could not only come (which was bad enough) as you pleased but go likewise (which was much, much worse). But now I am not so sure. Anyway, the time has come for it to be said . . .

No, wait a minute. Perhaps explanation will put the whole thing on a friendlier footing. So if you wouldn't mind concentrating for a few minutes . . . yes, I am addressing you, whom I can only call the casual catcher of trains; you with the suitcases and the time-table you are sure is last year's and the sandwich-paper thrust, you think, out of sight beneath the seat.

You are going to the seaside for an early holiday. You got into this train somewhere and settled down and thought, quite naturally I suppose, that everybody else in this train was going on holiday too. It is quite impossible for anyone going on holiday by train to imagine for an instant that anybody else in the train can be doing anything different. I know, for I always try when my turn comes.

But have you ever paused (this

question is quite rhetorical, for I know quite well that you haven't) to reflect that those people who climb wearily into the compartment twenty miles from your destination are going to the seaside, not for a holiday but because they live there?

Yes, live at the seaside. People do. I do. In fact we travel those twenty miles, by the train *you* think is a holiday-going train, every day. Therefore—and this is what I am stealthily leading up to—we have our established customs and, I insist, our rights.

We are divided into three classes, we season-ticket holders, according to whether we inhabit the front, the middle or the rear of the train. The rear party does not matter in the least, for its doctrine is one of despair. The front and centre parties matter a great deal, for not only are there twice as many of them but they have a purpose in being where they are. They want to get out first.

Let us suppose you are in the middle of the train. When ozone begins to mingle with the grit and the smuts you will notice a bustling among us and a wary exchange of glances. Which of us, we are wondering, is going to get into the corridor first? Not the first one to rise, by any means. No matter

how early one rises, one finds the doorway blocked by someone who has slipped in ahead, probably while we were turning round to pick up our evening paper. So we wait for somebody else to move first so that we can be the slippers-in-ahead.

You will notice at the same time an infiltration from the forward coaches; the up-train party is swinging into action. They are the people who travel always near the engine under the impression that there is more room there, and their migration is earlier than ours because they have farther to go to reach the coach that is going to stop opposite the exit-gate.

You hadn't realized that, had you? That it is actually the same train every day? We know every scratch, every strapless window, every patch of ancient brilliantine; and just whereabouts in the station each portion will come to rest. Each of us has his door, and there are not enough doors to go round . . .

It is a tricky business. The up-train people know we are smooth and swift in getting off the mark, and they try to sneak in ahead of us. *We* know they are trying to do this and try to sneak in ahead of *them* without breaking the rules governing getting out of the compartment. *They*, in their turn, know that *we* know . . . You see how it is? A train full of highly-strung, narrow-eyed people engaged in a vast game of bluff and double bluff. Except, of course, for the spineless rear party, content to straggle out of the station behind everybody.

Very well, then. It is *our* train and we stand in our eventual, hard-won positions being polite about the weather and quietly hating each other, feeling proprietorial.

Into all this *you* come—with your suitcases and your wondering if this is it. Right into the centre of this tension you stumble and clatter and jolt and blunder; ruining a subtle move here, frustrating finesse there. You block our doors with luggage. Behind you, we are last out of the train instead of first. You are in front of us at the gate and you cannot find your ticket. You sail away in a taxi while we stand and watch our bus dwindle in the distance.

So, as I set out to remark soon after we met, the time has come for it to be said:

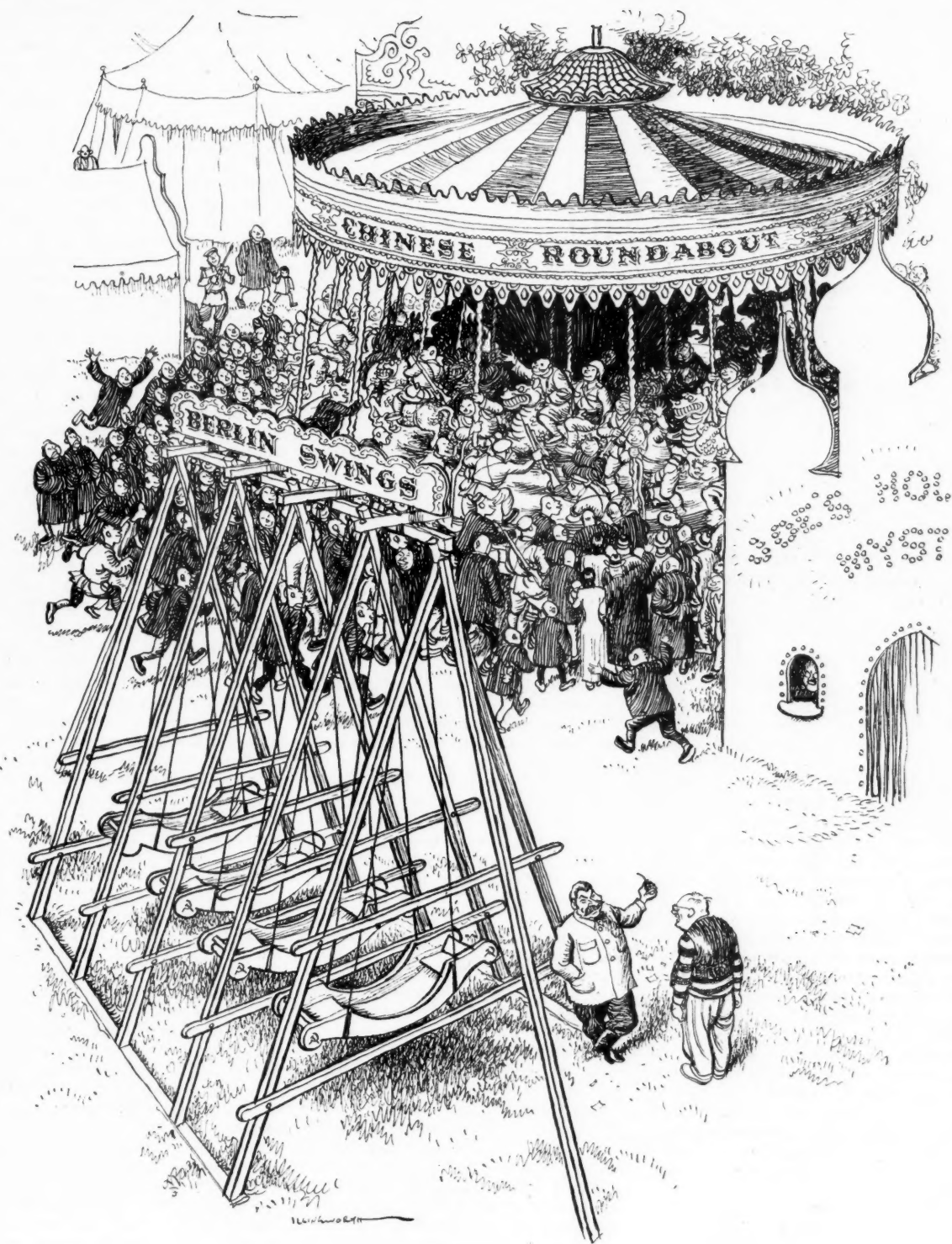
*"Will you get out of my way!"*

### Take Your Pick

"River and sea fishing, sailing, bathing, gold, billiards, first-class food and every comfort."—Hotel advt.



*"I couldn't see anything I fancied."*



**JOE'S AMUSEMENT PARK**

"What I loses on the swings . . ."



"... well, WHEREVER the little darling is, it sounds as though he's doing something constructive."

## The China Egg

ON Monday Purbright went to Paddington Station. At the booking office there were queues in front of two windows each of which was labelled "ALL STATIONS BEYOND READING." He chose the right-hand queue. In front of him were one sailor, one elderly raffia-topped woman and one young man in a new furry bowler-hat, the higher the wider. In front of them were more people. When at last he reached the window he asked for two and a half reduced-fare return-tickets to Helston and placed a Service voucher on the counter. "Other window," said the man. He crossed to the left-hand queue. Ahead of him were a sailor, a young man in a furry bowler-hat and an elderly raffia-topped woman. The man in the monocle and corduroy trousers, who had been behind him in the first queue, was already following him across. They smiled sheepishly at each other. "Trust me to sit on the china egg," said this man. "Trust me too," said Purbright.

When he got to the left-hand window he repeated his request. "Okay," the man said and, as is necessary with Service tickets, went to a far-off place to prepare them personally in manuscript. By the time he returned the man with the monocle had given way

to friendly restlessness. Purbright paid for his tickets and stood aside. "Well done," said the man with the monocle and bent forward to ask for a ticket to St. Austell.

Purbright went to the Inquiry Office to book seats. He took his place in the queue behind the man in the furry bowler-hat in front of whom were the elderly raffia-topped woman and the sailor. After twenty minutes he reached a youth with five fountain-pens in his top pocket. "I want to book three seats on the ten-thirty to Helston on Friday, please," he said. "Change at Par for St. Austell," said the young man gratuitously. "Helston," said Purbright. "I'm going to Helston." "Sorry, I'm sure," was the reply. "I thought you said 'St. Austell.' Change at Gwinear Road for Helston. Here you are: two corners and a middle beside."

As he went away Purbright looked at his train-tickets again. Written on all three was "Paddington to St. Austell." He went back to the left-hand queue at the booking office. He was breaking new ground now: the two in front of him were a boy with a hockey-stick and a small brown man with a hyacinth in a pot. When he reached the window he said: "I asked for tickets to Helston; these are

to St. Austell." "Helston?" said the man behind the grille. "Other window for Helston," Purbright crossed over to the right-hand queue and took his place behind two people. He spoke to the nearer. "I think if you are not careful," he said, "your hockey-stick will damage the hyacinth ahead." Duty done he stood and waited. At last his head went down and forward. "The man at the other window gave me tickets to St. Austell when I asked for Helston," he said. "St. Austell? Tickets for St. Austell at the other window," Purbright repeated his statement. "If the man at the other window gave you the wrong tickets he should replace them." "That is not the view of your colleague at the St. Austell window," said Purbright, making himself felt for the first time that day. "Hey, Nobby," said the man turning away. Purbright could not hear the words of the discussion which followed but the intonations were those of two Mr. Samuel Costa's, each hard-done-by by the other. After a very long time his man returned with new tickets. "Twenty-three shillings and ninepence extra to pay," he announced with satisfaction. Purbright took out his wallet. There was a ten-shilling note left in it. He searched his pockets and found one florin. "I have only twelve shillings," he said, and was told to keep the St. Austell tickets and pay the difference on the train.

At ten o'clock on Friday morning the Purbright family stood on Paddington Station watching the fairy cycle being weighed for excess-baggage fare. Purbright held a bulging, open wallet in his hand, and newspapers. The porter handed him a bill for three shillings and pointed to the booking office. "You pay there," he said. Accepting this extra document with difficulty Purbright went across and joined the queue. There were a few familiar figures such as raffia-top and the man with the hyacinth. He glanced at the open wallet in his hand; to his horror there was only one ticket. He turned round. A youth without a hockey-stick and a man in corduroy trousers (with a monocle) had joined the queue behind him. He looked at his watch; there was no time to leave the queue. He did tic-tac at his wife. She came across. "If it's two tickets you want," she said, "you dropped them and the porter got them; he's labelling the luggage." Purbright sighed. "Good," he said. "Sorry." It became his turn at the window. As he put the money on the counter a faint uncertainty came over him. He turned his head. "You might get the tickets back from the porter, will you?" he called to his wife. He



then went and saw the things into the van and joined his family on the train.

Later that day, relaxed and actually travelling, he gave the ticket-collector twenty-three shillings and ninepence and described his queue-and-ticket troubles to an audience consisting of his wife and the man with the monocle. The latter had resolved himself into a second-cousin of his wife, called Hodmangle, and was occupying a corner seat in the compartment. Hodmangle listened carefully, with worry on his face; he confirmed portions of the narrative from his own experiences and questioned Purbright about others.

At Par, Hodmangle left the train, still looking worried. Just as it began to move he appeared at the window, out of breath. "I've got it," he shouted. "I knew there was something wrong. I'll send your luggage on from St. Austell." His face disappeared.

To avoid his wife's eye Purbright looked across the carriage. The second lunch had just been called. It seemed to him that down the corridor there passed a boy with a hyacinth, a raffia-topped woman with a hockey-stick, a small brown man in a furry bowler-hat, the wider the higher, and a sailor with a china egg.

## The Oocuck

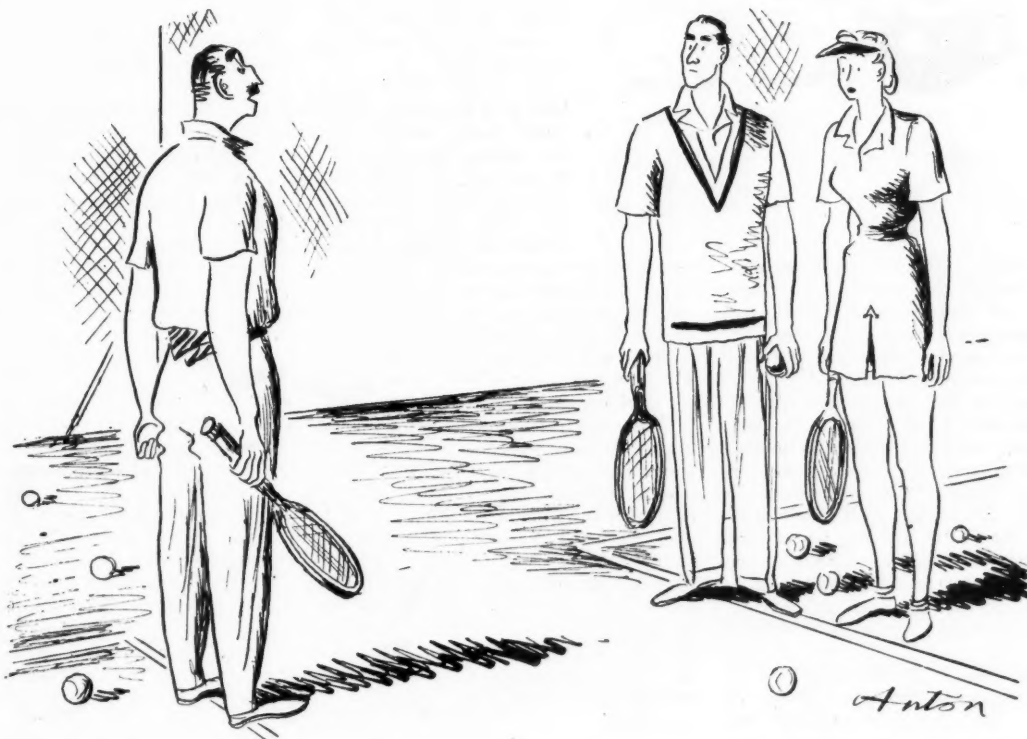
"THE cuckoo!" cried my child, the while I slept;  
"Sweet pop, the cuckoo! Lo, its cries impinge!  
The harbinger is here!" And up I leapt  
To hear the thing harbinge.

I flung the casement, thrust the visage through,  
Composed the features in rhapsodic look,  
Cupped the left ear and . . . lo! I heard an "oo,"  
Soon followed by a "cuck."

Another "oo"! A "cuck"! An "oo" again.  
A "cuck." "Oo-cuck." "Oocuck." Ditto. Repeat.  
I tried to pick the step up but in vain—  
I'd . . . "oo" . . . missed . . . "cuck" . . . the beat.

I'd missed the beat. And this would last till June  
And nothing could be done now to catch up—  
This fowl would go on hiccuping its tune,  
Hic after beastly cup.

"Oocuck!" . . . "Oocuck!" . . . that was four weeks ago,  
Four non-stop weeks of contrapuntal blight.  
My nerves are . . . what was that? . . . Ah, no! Ah, no!  
Spare me the ingalenight!



"Have you got one marked with a lion rampant surmounted by a crown?"

## At the Pictures

*The Last Days of Dolwyn—Melody Time*

PERHAPS a man with a powerful sense of "theatre" can never resist what it tells him to do. I'm led to this reflection after seeing *The Last Days of Dolwyn*, which was written, as

circumstance fits into place—not least the quite accidental circumstance that the villain when knocked down happens to be holding an open can of paraffin, which ensures his inflammability a few

moments later—that is regrettable. This is the tale of a Welsh village in 1892: we have been given a great deal of excellent, amusing stuff about the life of the village, and the essential attractiveness of the place has been made so clear that we resent it when we recognize the author's motive. He was concerned not so much to give straightforward pleasure as to increase the power of his preposterous climax by involving our sympathies with those of the inhabitants. The village is "drowned," flooded as the result of a commercial scheme to improve Liverpool's water supply; but in the last resort, in this story, the "drowning" depends on that accident.

It would have been better to forgo the theatrical device and make the climax, like the rest, dependent on character, for most of the characters are good. Mr. WILLIAMS himself is perhaps a conventional embittered villain (local boy makes bad), and there is a conventional air about some of the others; but

EDITH EVANS as the chapel caretaker is wonderfully convincing and makes some of her scenes most impressively moving, conveying a depth of emotion by sheer acting that I don't remember having seen equalled on the screen. And the portrait of the village itself, no matter how consciously rose-coloured (the sun is always shining, for one thing) is brilliant.

The latest Disney, *Melody Time*, is again

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a string of seven or eight sequences quite unconnected except by the not conspicuously imaginative device of a hand with a brush, which appears at the beginning of each to dash off a design for the title. Except for the fact that it is the same hand each time (presumably Mr. DISNEY's) and appears in the same way, there is no reason why one should be expected to consider as a whole what is really a programme of "shorts," or feel called on to think more highly of a sequence that consists of a richly hammed-up version of the song "Trees" because it is nominally in the same boat with one or two happier efforts.

I'm among those who think "live action" (the inclusion of direct colour photography of real people) the liability, not the asset, of the later Disneys. Here it afflicts only the last two episodes, and even they have bright moments; but the most successful of the group is the one dependent entirely on drawing and synchronization, and the nearest to pure abstraction of the Oscar Fischinger or Len Lye kind which, fifteen years ago, was still considered "highbrow." This is a roaring, boogie-woogie travesty of Rimsky-Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumble Bee"—great fun, and unmarred by those confounded blue birds that are always liable to pop up and saccharinify Mr. DISNEY's more pretentious narratives.

From the list of films going round the suburban cinemas, I would pick out *Unfaithfully Yours* (noticed here on March 2nd), which I believe will produce loud laughter from almost anyone capable of it, and *Another Part of the Forest* (noticed March 16th), full of unsympathetic people (the family of *The Little Foxes*) who are very entertaining talkers.

R. M.



(*The Last Days of Dolwyn*)

### TEAS, LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AND MIRACLES

Welsh Merri . . . . . EDITH EVANS  
Lord Lancashire . . . . . ALLAN AYNESWORTH

well as directed, by EMLYN WILLIAMS. He has twisted his story's climax into a bow of the most melodramatic situations it was possible to work up out of the theme, so that in comparison with the charm and humanity of the first part of the picture the highly-coloured falsity of the end is very noticeable; and he was led to do this entirely, I suggest, by a sense of "theatre" that told him the audience would be held quite spellbound until it was over. It is the essence of "good theatre," as of certain other drugs, that its effect is powerful but momentary, and when its action stops nobody is any the worse—or the better.

I don't belittle Mr. WILLIAMS's skill and ingenuity: *The Last Days of Dolwyn* has a tightly-constructed "plot" which was no amateur's job. But it is precisely the fact that one observes at the end how every



(*Melody Time*)

JOHN CHAPMAN AND THE ANGEL OF LITTLE APPLES

## From the Chinese

### In a Garden

**G**REENFLY, it's difficult to see  
Why God, who made the rose,  
made thee.

### Memory

I can remember the calling numbers  
Of people I have not seen for years.  
I can remember old sayings,  
Elaborate sayings  
My father taught me.  
I can remember verses,  
And pieces of prose  
I learned as a boy.  
I sit at the musical instrument,  
And, at the call of companions,  
Old tunes  
Which I had quite forgotten  
Flow from my fingers  
(Though the bass  
Is pretty spurious).  
They say "Sing"  
And the words of many verses  
Come up to me  
From the deep store of the mind  
(Though the voice  
Is pretty deplorable).  
I can remember  
Many facts and figures  
Which do not much assist me  
In the march of life,  
The date of the Conqueror,  
The dates of battles,  
The names of Kings,  
The colours of the rainbow,  
The Morse Code,  
The meaning of the signal flags,  
Some of the assertions of Euclid,  
And the names of many stars.

But can I ever remember  
The name of Mr. This  
When I am introducing him  
To Sir Something That?—  
Or, for that matter,  
The name of Sir Something That?  
No.

I was at school with Mr. This,  
We were at the same college  
At the University.  
Yesterday, in the home,  
I was speaking of him,  
Naturally,  
Easily.  
But now, at the social gathering,  
When I wish to introduce him  
To Sir Something That,  
Can I remember his blasted name?  
No!

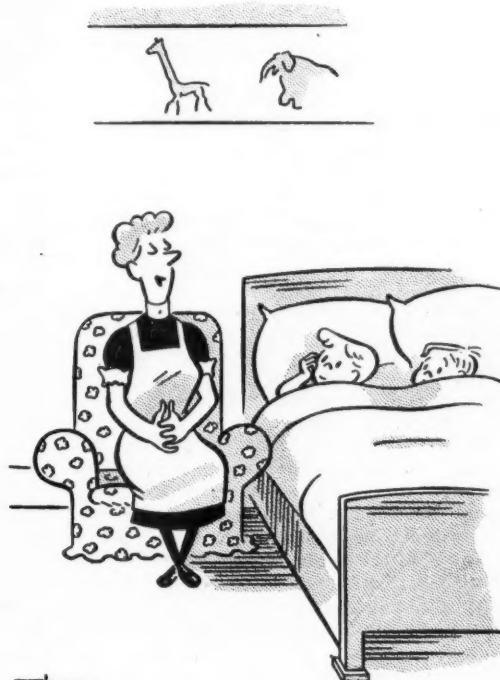
Sir Something That and I  
Have served on the same Com-  
mittee  
For two or three years.  
Often I refer to him  
With a warm heart  
And kindly words.

I know very well  
That he is the Chairman  
Of the National Culture Council  
And the Imperial Inquiry  
Into the Welfare of Winged Animals.  
But when, without warning,  
I encounter him at the social  
gathering  
And wish to introduce to him  
Mr. This,  
Can I remember his blasted name?  
Never!  
There is worse.  
Sometimes, boldly,  
I say to Mr. This  
"I remember you vividly,  
I love you dearly,  
Our association  
Will always be one of the big  
things  
In my small existence.  
But, excuse me,  
I have forgotten  
Your distinguished name."  
He tells me.  
And, ten minutes later,  
In the press of the social  
gathering  
I wish to introduce him  
To another old and beloved friend.

But, Oh, my philosophic aunt,  
I have forgotten  
His distinguished name again!

They tell me—  
And I suppose they are right—  
That I should not be cast down.  
"It is," they say,  
"Like a man filling his pack  
For a long journey.  
There is no room  
For all the little things  
He would like to take with him.  
What is not necessary  
Must be left behind."  
"So," they say,  
"After a long life  
There is no room in a single brain  
For all the things  
It has collected  
And would like to retain.  
Something must be left outside."  
Without doubt, they are right.  
All the same,  
I wish to goodness  
That when I introduce  
Two old friends  
To one another  
I could remember, at least,  
One of their names.

A. P. H.



DAVID  
LOW

"And they lived happily ever after. Copyright reserved."





"Of course, any rotten shot can hit the big ones."

## Report on a Piano

### INTRODUCTION

**T**HE subject of this report is a *grand piano*. This household is anxious to emphasize that point before it begins its report, if only to show off.

### DESCRIPTION OF PIANO

**General Appearance.** The measurements of this piano would probably reveal it as not so big as the sort on concert platforms; but it takes two people equally keen on the project to work a tape-measure on such a scale, and a small difference in circumference does not affect the fact that it is, as stated, a grand piano, going out and not up and being supported in mid-air on three legs. Each leg is in a little wooden bowl to stop the piano going through the floor, and when the two largest members of the household recently moved it a few inches nearer the window the largest (whom we will call A) shouldered it off the bowls and by yelling "Now!" at the second largest (B) frightened B into getting each bowl back under each leg just before it could be dropped on to B's hand.

The body of this piano is a harp-shaped, highly polished case the sides of which are used as a distorting mirror by such members of the household (C) as are the right height. The shape and solidity of the case give B, when rubbing off the finger-marks, the sensation of polishing the outside of Broadcasting House.

**Keyboard.** The usual arrangement, a great long row of white notes with bunches of black notes let in here and there; but it is complacently believed that this piano has some extra notes one end, if not the other.

**Music-Rest.** This lives under the top or main lid, which is neatly hinged to make the necessary opening and pulling about of wooden flaps a simple if ominous process. The whole lid could of course be shoved up and propped slanting by anyone with the face to think that the result justified it.

**Pedals.** The usual brass spoons, with—a feature peculiar to grand pianos—the connecting works going up sticks like roses or bicycle-brakes. As with all pianos, the keyboard moves its scalp when the soft pedal is pressed.

**Music-Stool.** The twiddly sort. If twiddled down it gets there sooner than expected, if up it may be used to put back the little roller that falls off the curtain-rail every night.

### PLAYING OF PIANO

It may generally be observed that, visitors and piano-tuners apart, every piano is hopelessly dependent on the members of its household. It cannot be denied that, in respect of this piano, the playing situation may be summed up as follows:

A does not play the piano.

B does not play by ear.

C does; also by elbow, chin and palm of hand.

Thus it may be seen that any ambitious arrangement of sound depends on B and to some extent on the sheet-music at B's disposal.

### SHEET-MUSIC SITUATION

The sheet-music situation in this household, if not the household itself, suffers from the disappearance, years ago, of B's former collection of Beethoven sonatas, Chopin, easy Brahms and so on. While it cannot be too firmly stated that at any minute B will replace this collection, it must be admitted that the following list does the present position ample justice.

**The Fairy Glade.** Sub-headed "A dainty melody, effectively harmonized for the beginner," this piece is one of several contained in a music magazine flourishing forty years ago and combining piano-scores with features of interest to music-lovers. As about a dozen numbers of the magazine were found when this household's furniture came out of store, it will be seen that it is well equipped with musical glimpses of the fairy world; but the thing about pieces called "The Fairy Glade," as even B can see without playing them, is how they would sound.

**Hurrah for the Flag!** Rousing marches arranged as duets are another feature of these magazines. It has already been noted that A does not play the piano, but B considers it mainly to B's credit that no piece of music from any of these magazines has yet reached this household's piano.

B sometimes reads bits of the print to A, who grunts receptively enough, but this does not make the actual sheet-music situation any less negative.

**Rachmaninoff's Prelude in Whatever Key It Is In.** Nor does this, which was found with the magazines. B played the first three notes (they proved surprisingly correct), but turned back at the chords.

This report has not the space to deal with the odd unidentified sheets (one of them undoubtedly in waltz time) which complete the collection, so that there remains only "Good King Wenceslas." This arrived in the laundry-box on the Tuesday before last Christmas. A simple, one-ply, holly-bordered affair, flimsy but capable if bent backwards of clinging to the music-rest, it proved, when

B had looked closer at the list of sharps, effectively harmonized and capable of being worked up, and if it had not disappeared among the newspapers it would have been a feature of the household's festivities.

#### TUNES PLAYED WITH ONE HAND AND NO MUSIC

Here we have a much brighter picture. With typical modesty B claims an enormous repertoire of little one-handed tunes correct in almost every detail. When it is added that the repertoire includes "The Teddy Bears' Picnic," with its well-known changes of key, whatever B hopes to gain from this section of the report will have been fully gained.

#### CONCLUSION

One-handed tunes or not, this household ends its report by emphasizing its plans for the future. They include buying "The Teddy Bears' Picnic" to see if the darned thing really keeps changing key like that.

ANDE

### Cricket Announcement

To the Secretary, M.C.C., Lord's Cricket Ground, London

SIR,—As chairman of Flintfield Cricket Club I am desired by my committee to inform you that the changes in regulations which you have announced for this season are unlikely to affect this Club in any way. I refer of course to—(1) the taking of the new ball at sixty-five overs instead of fifty-five; (2) the lunch interval, which now reverts to forty minutes; and (3) the tea interval, which, we note, is extended to twenty minutes.

With regard to item (1) we assume that the addition of ten overs to the life of the "old" ball is intended as a measure of economy, and commendable though this undoubtedly is, the difficult financial circumstances in which this Club perpetually finds itself render it necessary for the life of our ball to be prolonged considerably further. With all due respect, therefore, we intend to continue as hitherto; namely, to use the same ball throughout the season until either:

(a) it disappears so far under the wooden hut that it cannot be retrieved even with the long rake, or

(b) Joe Tebbutt, saddler, and long-stop and fine leg, informs the committee that the seam is beyond further repair, whichever is the sooner.

Item (2), the lunch interval, does not really concern us as Sam Partridge, our slow spin bowler, can never get through with his pigs for us to start before 2.45 P.M. at the earliest.

As regards item (3), the tea interval, this is a matter that is entirely out of our hands, depending as it does on the temperament of Mrs. Tripp's pressure stove and Major Jelley's cow, Ethel, neither of which can be relied upon with any certainty. If the pressure stove responds as readily to Mrs. Tripp's ministrations as on the occasion when the flames consumed two practice stumps and the vicar's left-hand batting-glove, then the tea will be brewed and cold long before Ethel has been induced to part company with her milk. On the other hand, should Ethel be found to be in one of her less perverse moods and Mrs. Tripp unable to coax more than two sparks and a glimmer from her infernal machine, then the situation, although reversed, is the same, and the players may well be obliged to forgo their tea until after the match.

Bearing these circumstances in mind (circumstances with

which, we understand, you are fortunate enough not to have to contend at Lord's) you will appreciate the fact that only when the pressure stove and the cow are in unison can there be an actual interval for tea at all. Even then, however, it has been found impracticable to specify the amount of time that should elapse before play recommences, the guiding factor generally being how long it takes the wicket-keeper to put his pads back on.

My committee is most anxious that you should be acquainted with these particulars so that, should you at any time be persuaded to direct Denis Compton to play for us on the occasion of our annual fixture with Upper Greenthorpe, he may be forewarned and not feel it incumbent upon him to report these unavoidable violations of official practice.

Yours, etc.,

(COL.) B. CROCKETT (ret.)

Chairman, Flintfield Cricket Club

### Signifying Nothing

THE blackcap blathers effortlessly on,  
The lark soliloquizes in the sky,  
The pigeons purr, the pipits pro and con,  
The little auk articulates on high.  
Blithely upon the bee-embellished air  
Is borne the muffled sound of measured braying.  
These are the voices I can always bear  
Because I have no notion what they're saying.



"No—it sounds more like that bit between Hong-Kong and Manila to me."



*Yes, perfect weather, isn't it?—but I expect we'll pay for it later on.*



*Yes, it is perfect, isn't it?—but I daresay we'll pay for it later on.*



*Yes, isn't it perfect?—but I fear we'll pay for it later on.*

## American Commentary

### IX

GOOD EVENING. If anybody had said, a week ago, that what we were in for was something more than just a redinflationary cut-back to normal prices, and might even be a full-blown nineteen-twenty-nine-type business bust, this forecast would, in fact, have been so wrong that it is a relief to be able to report to you that, as far as is reliably known here, no one made it. What has, however, in the past few days, pushed even the recent break in pumpkin prices off the front pages has of course been the statement made before the Uncivil Activities Committee by Senator Brickenbacker, of Hideho, to the effect that he not only did not use the words in which he is reported to have described Mr. Secretary Birdseed, but to the best of his recollection did not use any words to describe Mr. Birdseed, and doubts whether he could, for that matter, have found words to describe Mr. Birdseed; which makes it a safer-than-average bet that if the administration can find a way to push the Senator back on to the inside pages before the publication of the Strategic Seafood Survey, the loan to South Amnesia will get at least as far as the House of Representatives this session and may (barring accidents) get as far as South Amnesia. I should, however, warn you that Congress is at this moment showing a typically year-after-election-year unwillingness to go all the way with the President in ending price-support for pumpkin-growers, and that at least one Senator, in the shape of Senator Tinhorn of Minnetonka, has gone on record that the minimum

conditions for avoiding a bigger-than-last-time trade recession are a steady rise in pumpkin prices and a sharp fall in statements by Senator Brickenbacker. Now, it is fair to say that the present Congress is easily the most anxious to play ball of any Congress the President has had to deal with since the last one; but do not, for all that, let anybody tell you that it is going to make continued aid to the dollar-expecting democracies dependent on Senate approval of the Jerkwell agreement on inter-state transportation. For one thing of course (that is, the way the President reads the constitution) the agreement does not give him any powers he did not have in the first place, and for another thing the question right now is whether the President does strictly have power to do any more than just read the constitution quietly anyway, without consent of Senator Tinhorn and two-thirds of the House Poor Relations Committee present and voting. More importantly, though, there are, as I am sure you recognize, enough people trying to get the ear of the President by one means and another right now to make short-term speculation on any of our long-run policy objectives about as unprofitable as asking a Mid-Western peanut-rancher what the Senate should do with the Strategic Seafood Survey, or how he feels about what Congress thinks Senator Brickenbacker called Mr. Birdseed. Almost anywhere, that is to say, West of the Abracadabras, you would find opinion pretty well one-hundred-per-cent. behind Mr. Bulkhead in taking his stand on what is being described as a flat

commitment in support of the Doghouse doctrine, partly because most people are now aware that peace-time aid on a war-time basis is not the same thing as war-time aid on a peace-time basis, and partly because, as the President has pointed out, whatever commitment is entered into now is going to be a flat one all right by the time Mr. Bulkhead has taken his stand on it. You are perhaps wondering whether, at this rate, it might not pay the administration to frame a standstill amendment to the steering committee's rules on motions to introduce a filibuster, which would avoid forcing Congress to go on record as holding up the San Fiasco Seaway Bill after voting down the Mississippi Steamboat Bill, and would allow the President to meet Congress halfway on peanut prices without the risk that Mr. Birdseed might meet Senator Brickenbacker. Sooner or later, it is clear, we are going to have to face up to Mr. Doghouse's warning that a smallest-in-years domestic corn crop could have the effect of pulling our foreign policy still farther in the direction of an overall showdown on hemisphere defence, with all that this would imply in the way of re-shaping tax policies, re-thinking peanut policies and maybe replacing Mr. Birdseed with someone prepared, if necessary, to get the ear of Senator Brickenbacker and pull him sharply in the direction of the San Fiasco Seaway—words which, if they mean anything, probably mean a continuing unlikelihood that any of our really major problems will have found a complete solution before the next American Commentary. Good night.

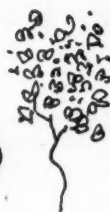




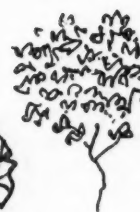
*Yes, perfect, isn't it?—but I'm afraid we'll pay for it later on.*



*Yes, quite perfect—but of course we'll pay for it later on.*



*Yes, perfect—but we'll pay for it later on, no doubt..*



## False Colours

**I** SCORNE the classic neckties that other people wore—  
The striped, the plaid, the check ties of college, club and corps.  
My tie might ape the rainbow or glow with sombre tone,  
A flowing stock or plain bow—but let it be my own.

I bought my tie from Woolworth, it cost me two-and-nine,  
I got my money's full worth in colour and design.  
I chose the tie that I like, and stared alarmed to see  
Round other necks a tie like the one I chose for me.

Could some outlandish coterie have staked a corporate claim?  
The Minchinhampton Rotary, the Choirboys' Guild of Thame?  
Is this the tie that brands men of some exclusive trade?  
The badge of Butlin's Bandmen?  
The Flintshire Fire Brigade?

Are these the tough Old Comrades of some immortal troop?  
Heroes of countless bomb-raids—or Putney Savings Group?  
How soon, I cried in torment, would someone thump my chest  
And ask if what I wore meant the same as all the rest?

The fancied voice was hearty, the hail would rouse the bus:  
"I see you've joined the Party!"  
"Hoorah, you're one of Us!"  
"What year were you at Catt'rick?"  
"What house were you at Bray?"  
"Was yours the famous hat-trick that saved St. Crispin's Day?"

I cringed like any whippet, yet knew not what I feared;  
I longed to wear a tippet,  
I longed to grow a beard.

\* \* \* \* \*

The hours of day were hideous,  
The wakeful night went by.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now—to my creed perfidious—I wear my old school tie.



*Perfect, yes—but we'll certainly pay for it later on.*



*Yes, we'll pay for it later on, all right.*



*Yes, I said we'd pay for it.*

## The Academy of the Year

WHEN so distinguished a critic as Mr. Eric Newton can say, as he said thirteen years ago, that "Annually the private viewer finds less and less to talk about on the walls of Burlington House," the outlook for the ordinary and uninformed visitor to the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition is distinctly unpromising. I expected to be struck dumb; I nursed a hope that I might become only temporarily tongue-tied. But Fate with its happy knack of protecting the interests of children, drunkards and journalists had so arranged things for my "private view" that the walls of Burlington House hardly mattered. Many of the paintings were not yet in place. Some were just lolling about in untidy groups; a few stood in corners, like delinquent schoolboys, with their faces to the wall. I was surprised to see "H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh" in Gallery IV lying flat on his back surrounded by step-ladders and white aprons, and a handsome brood-mare fast asleep on a bed of shavings in the middle of Gallery X. I was not sorry, however, to learn from an apologetic keeper or commissionaire that the catalogues had failed to arrive from the printers, for this contretemps threw the legitimate critics into a fine old flap, loosened their tongues, and converted Burlington House into a network of whispering galleries.

"If that isn't a Cundall," hissed the art critic of the *Daily* —, "it's a jolly good imitation, eh?"

"Either a Cundall or a—a . . . whatsis-name, you know, the chap



No. 705. "I can't stand much more of this."

who . . .?" said the art critic of the *Weekly* —.

Together they moved in on the canvas for the kill, adjusted their spectacles, and peered into the gloom at the foot of the picture. They looked up simultaneously.

"As I feared," said the *Daily* —, and walked rapidly away.

In another gallery I found a clutch of critics wondering anxiously whether Mr. Churchill had anything in, and if so where the hell it could be.

"I saw something just now that could only be a Churchill," said one, "in the long room." And as the group hurried off to inspect the discovery he



No. 601. "You haven't forgotten that Dick Barton's on in five minutes, Daddy?"

added, "But, of course, the old man's so inconsistent. Paints in half a dozen styles."

It was all most interesting and instructive.

The absence of catalogues made the selection of "the picture of the year" extremely difficult. Normally, I understand, the process is fairly straightforward. The critics consult their short-lists of candidates and start, very tentatively and guardedly, to bid. Naturally there is much hedging, much "If only"-ing and "What a pity"-ing. Then, quite suddenly, one critic stakes his reputation on a flat decision and startles his colleagues out of their clichés. "You know," he says, "I like that. It's got something." "Yes," says another bold one. "The right arm may be a bit out of drawing, but the thing's tremendously strong and morpous." The atmosphere now becomes

hysterical and a crowd begins to form. Soon the term "picture of the year" is tried out in whispers and the excitement mounts. A rival group of critics who are standing before an outside landscape sense their danger and raise their voices to attract the attention and support of the waverers. For a few minutes there is a noisy struggle for supremacy: then, with the crowd three-deep round the portrait, the landscapists surrender and break up sulkily.

It is all over. A commissionaire eavesdropping on the outskirts of the mob rushes away with eyes blazing to inform the masses.

This year, though, I don't know quite *what* will happen. Last week there were so many unidentifiable contenders for the honour and so many critics with a chance to achieve their lifelong ambition of leading in the winner that almost anything seemed possible. By now, I suppose, the business will have been settled in some way, but at the initial pre-view quite fifty pictures were in the running. Why, for a short time it looked as though even I might manage to promote the picture of the year—and quite by accident. I had been resting with my eyes fixed rather eagerly on a picture of the Red Lion Brewery when I became aware that I was not alone. Three critics were breathing heavily over my shoulder.

"Fair makes your mouth water, doesn't it?" I said.

"Yes," said the one with the long hair and the corduroys. "It's quite *farouche*. I like the rhythmic counterpoint of the perspective."

"If you ask me," said the second, "it's rather Chantrey."

"The chromatic theme is quite, quite impressive," said the one wearing blue glasses.

Within two minutes my team of supporters had grown to eight, all very enthusiastic. Then I caught sight of a nice cool pub on the other side of the gallery and left. As I did so the corduroys moved smartly into my place.

Altogether I made four complete laps of the exhibition and I don't think anybody passed me. There is nothing secret about my method. I just set myself a good steady pace and *stick to it*, taking care to straighten my knees at each step. The arm action should be slight and the breathing rhythmic but shallow. It is a mistake to accelerate when passing something genuinely bad



No. 362. "A plague on these large newspapers."

or merely imitative, for this throws more work on to the ball of the foot and deepens the breathing so that the lungs use up their reserve of nicotine and the viewer is tortured by the "No Smoking" notices.

Some viewers are content to make but one lap of the exhibition, moving slowly from one picture to the next with methodical care and devotion to duty, but I regard this policy as mistaken. For one thing, it looks bad—as though the viewer's one object is to get his money's worth; and again, it tends to slow down the circuits of those who like to take art in their stride. People who sit through a session at Burlington House are beneath consideration. They are there merely because they like to glare at viewers who walk between them and the walls.

As for the exhibits—well, there are seven hundred and twenty-three oil paintings, three hundred and thirty-three water colours, tempera, drawings and miniatures, one hundred and eight engravings and etchings, seventy-four architectural drawings and models, and one hundred and forty-one pieces of sculpture. One thousand three hundred and seventy-nine all told, and a very large proportion of them deal in some way or other with the subject of drink. Yes, drink. At first, I thought that my calculation might have sprung from a purely personal conditioned reflex and a sort of mirage; subsequently, however, I was able to make an inventory of the alcoholic items and check my first impressions against undeniable facts. I found that "Red Lion Brewery" mentioned above was supported by "Brown Ale," "Public Bar," "Saturday Night at 'The Grapes,' Limehouse," "Hops," "Brenda" (with

pint), "Saturday Night" (with quarts), "Café Royal," "In the Pub," and many more pictures in varying stages of insobriety. I mention this because it struck me as odd—drink being so costly and artists by repute so penurious.

Another strange feature of the 1949 show is the number of references to bathing—from "Baby's Bath-Time" to the somewhat alarming "He put her in an Acid Bath, Miss." In fact there is so much bath-water about this year that I fancied for a time that the whole thing had been organized by the Ministry of Health.

There is the customary array of stiff portraits, studies of tired business men all looking strangely ill at ease, and



No. 1335. "Yes, but what's she doing in the sack race?"

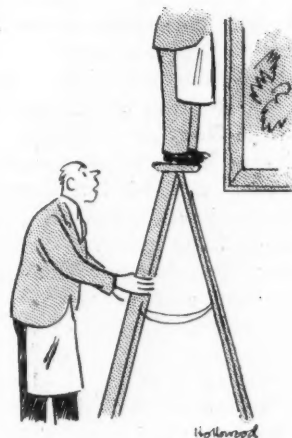
"Vivien Leigh," by T. C. Dugdale.

Wisely, I think, the sculptors have once again restricted their products almost entirely to the male head-piece and the female figure. This is the policy of safety-first in art. A distinguished and shapely male head, it seems, is seldom found on a beautiful body, clothed or unclothed, and an interesting female form is seldom surmounted by a face that can be flattered in bronze or stone. So there are no female portraits to match the galaxy

of male talent represented by "Kingsley Martin, Esq.," "J. B. Priestley, Esq.," "Jan Masaryk," "Hannen Swaffer," and "The late Lord Keynes of Tilton," and no male figures to match the wealth of anonymous and sawn-off female torso. If a sculptor has to model the male figure he puts it in uniform astride a horse: if he decides to fashion a female head he chooses an uncomplaining Negress or Oriental as his subject. There's a lot of good sound common sense in art circles.

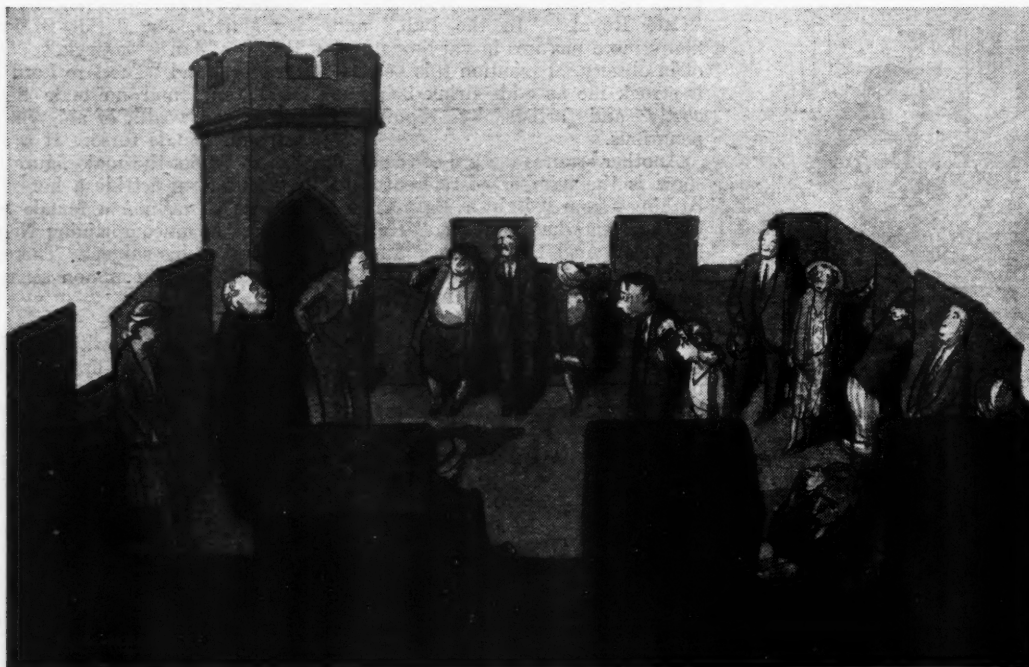
If I am asked whether this one hundred and eighty-first Summer Exhibition adds up to "a good Academy," whether it is better than usual, "an exhilarating survey of the greater portion of our contemporary production in art," as one critic capably put it, or, on the other hand, just dull and depressing, I can only say that for me all pictures are problem-pictures and repeat that I only received my catalogue on my way out of Burlington House. I must add, though, that Gallery XI, which includes several so-called concessions to the modern movements, seems to me much less interesting than the rest of the exhibition. And in this view I am supported by no less an authority than Sir Alfred Munnings, the President of the Royal Academy, but not, apparently, by many of those who attended his rollicking banquet on the eve of the other, the official pre-view.

HOD



"If you're so sure Sir Alfred's a surrealist, what d'you want me to go and ask him for?"





*"Now, I wonder if any of you happened to notice how many steps there are in the tower?"*

## Collective Poem

*The work of thirty-six poets "Of the 'Thirties and After" appears in a recent anthology, "Poetry of the Present." The compounder of the following piece apologizes to them for the liberty he has taken in abstracting a line (he hopes representative) from each; and for the further liberty of adding one of his own—which, let the reader determine.*

NEVER presume that in this marble stable  
 I offer you the bubble of free-will  
 With the somersaults and fireworks, the roast  
 and the smacking kisses,  
 And leave the quiet depths unmeasured still.  
 Tranced under trees by the eldritch light of sundown,  
 Down in Cokey Joe's,  
 In Glasgow, that damned sprawling evil town,  
 My public don't—if I may say so—  
 To Heaven thrust flower-faces with the same  
 Eyes dark and innocent  
 Admiring themselves in swan's blood  
 That silent gardeners have strewn with ash.  
 No: for we see, stilettoed by the mind's green  
 flash  
 This dummy man, this blade of brilliant tacks  
 Stuck bad-toothed and edgy from the blue-bag sea  
 To keep alive and kick. This is the resolution  
 From all these events, from the slump, from the war,  
 from the boom,  
 Whose tongues screech out with the tearing sound  
 of tin.

But what when the cellar roof caves in,  
 And I am dumb to tell the crooked rose  
 There is a Supreme God in the ethnological section  
 Rolled inward, folded, foliated close,  
 Caged in cartilage, wrapped in my ribs, dove-cote of destiny,  
 of homing to-morrows,  
 A trap for every sorrow  
 (We are not yet collected works, my dear)  
 One with the night, the animals and the stars?  
 Through richly stained Victorian glass  
 The sleepwanderer carries  
 Laughter, like sunlight in the cucumber,  
 To the narrow, stone-flagged hall, and the dingy stair  
 Of green. Despite flood and the lightning's rifle  
 A chain of jiggling figures on the sky-line  
 Went battering round the town with a boozy, zigzag  
 tread—  
 Our certain fathers, I expect—  
 So flies love's meteor to her shroud of winds,  
 In the reeling blue serene, looking for something dead.  
 We have no home. Our bourgeois home is wrecked.

R. C. S.



THE PHOENIX

**TUESDAY, April 26th.**—Parliament, like the rest of the nation, loves the Royal Navy, and whenever that redoubtable force is "in the news" interest is intense. So it was that both Houses were crowded to-day when statements were made about the tragic news, concerning the Royal Navy, that had come from the River Yangtse. It was tragic news, but it had that element of fortitude and heroism which so often goes with a tale of the British sailor.

The two Houses were, to say the least, perturbed by the news that H.M.S. *Amethyst* was imprisoned in the Yangtse, below Nanking, after having been fired on by Chinese Communist forces while passing up the river. All members of both Houses were angry at the action of the Communists, and the Opposition side was angry with the Government too—it was not very clear why. But there was a general feeling that the Government ought to have "done something" about the affair.

What, precisely, this action ought to have been never emerged, even in the hour-long cross-examination of the Prime Minister in the Commons or the gentler catechizing of the First Lord of the Admiralty in the Lords. But it was clear that the Government itself was not happy about the situation and that something will, indeed, be done about it.

From the account of events given by Mr. ATTLEE, it appeared that what had happened was this: H.M.S. *Amethyst* had gone to Nanking to relieve H.M.S. *Consort*, which had been standing by in case British subjects were in need of aid. The change-over was planned to take place during a cease-fire arranged between the two sides in the Chinese civil war, but the *Amethyst* had been fired on many hours before the cease-fire was due to end. And the shooting had resulted in severe casualties on the British ship, which had replied to the scorching fire, inflicting (so the Chinese Communists said) heavy casualties among the attacking forces.

The Prime Minister paid warm tribute to the bravery of the crew of *Amethyst*, and the Opposition signified, by their cheers, that there were no two opinions on that, at any rate.

It was generally agreed that, as a statement of the facts, Mr. ATTLEE'S speech was a model of its kind—clear, frank, factual, complete. But Mr. CHURCHILL soon made it plain that the facts disclosed were less satisfactory.

Putting his horn-rimmed spectacles

## Impressions of Parliament

**Tuesday, April 26th.**—Both Houses: Statements on China

**Wednesday, April 27th.**—House of Lords: Fruit and Veg  
House of Commons: Trouble Over Steel

**Thursday, April 28th.**—House of Commons: A Piece More History

on the very tip of his nose, as he does when in an inquisitorial mood, he asked a series of questions in the manner of prosecuting counsel. To all of them Mr. ATTLEE answered with spirit, but with a slightly defensive air.

Why, asked Mr. C., was there no air cover for the ship, passing—admittedly on her "lawful occasions"—along the river? Because, said Mr. A., we were not at war with the Chinese Communists, and this was not a warlike but a peaceful operation.

Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, "with" Mr. CHURCHILL, as the lawyers say, asked



Impressions of Parliamentarians

81. Lord Reith

why, if the sending of the ship along the river was not considered provocative (and he agreed it was not) the sending of air cover *should* be considered provocative. The reply to this was as before.

Mr. C. said the whole episode called for careful examination and a full report to the House. Why, for instance, had we not got in Chinese waters at this time one or two aircraft-carriers?

Mr. A. replied that the "men on the spot" had, in his view, acted wisely and correctly and that he was not prepared to say, in public, what might be decided about Royal Navy dispositions.

Rising dramatically, Mr. CHURCHILL cried: "British prestige has suffered—

except with regard to the valour of our men. Is this to be the end? It is obvious that something must be done! I want an assurance that the British flag will be respected."

Mr. A.'s reply, to the effect that much had to be left to the man on the spot,

drew a flash of anger from Mr. C. He said the Government ought to be in the closest touch with the men on the spot, "instead of throwing the whole burden on them and expecting that they could get off behind them for all their muddle!"

It was Mr. A.'s turn to be angry, and he leaped to the table with such alacrity that his supporters (hitherto notably silent) burst into cheers.

"I am not prepared," shouted the Prime Minister, his voice quivering with anger, "to take that from the right honourable gentleman! He knows quite well that for weeks there has been this difficult situation in the Yangtse. There is no question of sheltering behind any commander. I approve his action and support it."

By now the exchanges were becoming more acidulated and less dignified, and when Commander GALBRAITH asked whether air cover was actually available, Mr. ATTLEE raised astonished cries of "Oh!" from all parts of the House by commenting that nobody had explained "what aircraft could have done in this matter."

The rot having started, it was not long before the Government side was roaring that "the Tories wanted war" and drowning further supplementary questions.

As if to prove that the other side of the House had no monopoly of questionable taste, the Opposition made sarcastic noises when Mr. WILLIE GALLACHER, the Communist, expressed his personal sympathy with the relatives of those killed in the affair. Mr. GALLACHER reduced them all to shamefaced silence with the quiet comment that he knew what bereavement in war meant. They then remembered that sons of his had died in the landing in Europe. Then Mr. Speaker, firmly but tactfully, put an end to the questioning for to-day.

The subsequent debate on war pensions produced nothing more exciting than a comment by Mr. BEVERLEY BAXTER that a remark by Commander PURSEY was "caddish." This being considered unparliamentary, he was ordered to withdraw it, but exercised his option of withdrawing himself. This simple way out became less attractive when Mr. B. found himself





*"Now then, darling, remember what mother told you: 'Let sleeping Brontosauri lie'."*

courteously escorted from the precincts by Colonel THORPE, the Assistant Serjeant-at-Arms, leaving a pleasant dinner-party downstairs without its host. Rules, as they say, is rules.

**WEDNESDAY, April 27th.**—The House of Commons showed itself at (one hopes) its worst to-day, when the Report stage of the Iron and Steel Bill was begun. Aëons ago, when the Bill began its passage, a "guillotine" was imposed, giving so many days for the committee stage, so many for report. The committee stage passed in the relative obscurity of an upstairs room, but report, of necessity, was made on the floor of the House.

The clanging blade of the "guillotine" was to fall twice nightly, incontinently cutting off any amendments that happened to be in its path. And when the first descent occurred, there were loud boos from the Opposition. Such sounds are but rarely heard in the House of Commons—loud, ironical cheering is the more normal method of expressing dissatisfaction—and, as an unpremeditated and spontaneous indication of dislike, it might have been excused.

But the booing went on for a long time, and it drowned so universally popular a speaker as Sir FRANK

SOSKICE, the Solicitor-General. And then (as so often happens, in Parliamentary, as well as international, affairs) the "other side" became infected, and Opposition speakers were drowned in a tornado of boos. So it went on, each side submerging the other's speakers in a sea of "zoological noises," as Mr. CHURCHILL once called them.

Major MILNER, in the chair, did his best to restore free speech, but it was some time before even he succeeded. And the whole thing broke out again when the guillotine fell for the second time, later in the evening.

Meanwhile, their Lordships were talking about the supply of vegetables. Lord SELBORNE complained that the Government's policy of importing foreign fruit and vegetables was disheartening the home growers because it led to disastrous gluts and losses. For instance, the national demand for onions this year was estimated at 240,000 tons—yet the Ministry of Food had signed a contract with Holland for 296,000 tons, more than satisfying the market and leaving the home-grown onions on the rubbish heap.

But Lord HUNTINGDON, for the Government, did not see so gloomy a picture. In fact he set their Lordships' mouths watering with a graphic

picture of bumper crops of apples and plums from Britain's orchards. Lord SELBORNE, fruit-grower and nurseryman, confirmed this view, and everybody beamed happily. But it was not very clear what is to happen about the onions.

**THURSDAY, April 28th.**—Mr. MORRISON, in the absence of the Prime Minister, made what he said (to approving cheers) was an historic statement about India's future in the Commonwealth. It was the result of the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in Downing Street and was to the effect that India, while becoming an independent republic, would continue to recognize the KING as Head of the Commonwealth.

All eyes turned to Mr. CHURCHILL. He rose slowly and said that in spite of all that might come, some of it potentially adverse, he approved the plan; nothing in it injured the majesty of the Crown or the personal dignity of the KING. Therefore, it was the duty of all to make it a lasting success.

The Government side burst into a roar of cheers, mingling with those of the Opposition; and yet another page had been turned in the history of India—and the Commonwealth.



"It's just one of those perfect spring days, sarge, when everybody's being good."

## I Got Rhythm

I DO not quite know how this rhythm I have got came to me. I was thinking about something different at the time—I wasn't thinking about rhythm at all. In fact I was thinking about chickens, and wondering whether, if you crossed a Rhode Island Red with a White Wyandotte, you would get a Rhode Island White, or just a Red Wyandotte. I had been thinking about that, off and on, for years, because it is a problem that no poultry book I have ever come across deals with; it is a thing you have to work out for yourself. I dare say it would be quite simple if you had Rhode Island Reds and White Wyandottes of your own, which so far I never have had.

Anyhow, I suddenly found I had evolved a new and startling rhythm all my own, and the problem was, what to do with it. It seemed to me there must be money in it. What it needed, of course, was to be made into a tune, and that was where I was foxed, because musical is a thing I am not. In fairness to myself, however, I must say I have often felt on the verge of being musical. When I listen to tunes like, say, "Lily of Laguna" or the "Rhapsody in Blue" I see they are tunes I might easily have thought of myself, and it is just a matter of luck that Leslie Stuart and George Gershwin managed to get in first. But tunes do not seem to form in my head until I have heard them a good many times

first, and on this occasion, when I tried to set my rhythm to music, all I got was a string of taps and thumps on one note. I do not even know what note it was, partly because I cannot read music unless it is the kind that uses the figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 for the fingers and a cross for the thumb. In any case, my rhythm sounded just as good on any note.

So then I thought that maybe it was not the rhythm of a tune at all, but rather of a dance. I do not know who invented the waltz-rhythm (*long-short-short, long-short-short*), but whoever it was must have made a packet out of it, for the waltz is a very widely danced dance. And *my* rhythm was longer and much more original than just *long-short-short*. It is difficult to describe, as I know so little about music, and to the best of my knowledge even composers like Beethoven and Bach, to name but two, did not ever succeed in writing their music in words. My rhythm, however, bore a strong similarity to the letters V E (*short-short-short-long-short*) in the Morse code. During my signalling career in the Royal Navy I used the Morse letters V E pretty frequently, and it is just possible I derived the inspiration for my rhythm from these old signalling days.

So I went to a dancing-instructress, and said I had invented a new rhythm, and perhaps she would like to invent a dance to go with it.

"It goes like this," I said, doing it on her piano. I do not wish to give the impression that the piano is an instrument I normally play, but I found it quite easy to play my rhythm. I played it on the white key exactly opposite the lock.

"Where did you hear it?" she asked suspiciously.

"I am hearing it all the time," I said. "It is a rhythm that has taken possession of my head. Like 'Punch, brothers, punch!' you know."

"Are those the words to it?" she said.

"Indeed they are not," I said. "For one thing, if you had only listened, you would realize that 'Punch, brothers, punch!' are words you could not possibly sing to my rhythm. For another, 'Punch, brothers, punch!' is a lyric written by Mark Twain, long before my rhythm was invented."

"It is short for a lyric," she said.

"It does not stop there," I said. "It goes on, 'Punch with care, Punch in the presence of the passenjare.'"

"What is a passenjare?" she inquired. Dancing is her line.

"A passenjare," I said, "is a passenger. He had to call it passenjare to get the rhythm right."

"I thought," she said coldly, "you claimed you had invented the rhythm yourself?"

"The rhythm I have invented," I said, "is another rhythm altogether. It goes, '*tum-ti-ti-tum, tum-ti-tum.*'"

"I do not see any difference," she said.

"You have got me muddled," I explained. "I have got my rhythm confused with Mark Twain's rhythm."  
"You could do a sort of polka to it," she said.

"Not to mine," I said confidently.  
"To Mark Twain's, yes, but not to mine."

"What sort of a dance *could* you do to yours?" she said.

I said I would show her, and I did a sort of polka to it. Then I stopped, firmly thought of Mark Twain's rhythm for the purpose of dismissing it from my mind, dismissed it, and thought of my own rhythm in its place.

"Or, rather, a dance like this," I said, doing three short hops, one long slide, and one more short hop. It left me on the wrong foot, and I had to switch over quickly to "Punch, brothers, punch!" to regain my balance.

"It is very complicated," she said.

"Only the first part is mine," I said. "The second part is Mark Twain's. A sort of polka."

"I do not think yours is a sort of anything," she said.

"I know it isn't, so far," I said humbly. "I thought perhaps you would like to make it a sort of something."

"I do not think I would," she said.

I therefore came away with my rhythm still in my head. During the interview, though, something had happened to it. When I tried it over in my bath the next morning, it had lost one of its shorts. It was now just the letter "F"—still expressing it in terms of the Morse code. It just went short-short-*long*-short, which was a nuisance, as I had half-composed the words for a song in my rhythm. The words ran:

"Bottles of brandy  
Make me feel dandy,"

and they were now completely useless. I abandoned them, and, in my disappointment, managed to forget my rhythm for some weeks. Then I perceived I could remodel the words to fit my new rhythm. The new version ran as follows:

**"Some like brandy,  
Others shandy."**

But during those weeks my rhythm had again altered. It had lost another short—unfortunately, the end one.

All I now had left was the letter "U" (Morse code)—short-short-*long*. It was a taking rhythm still, but it was too much like the waltz-rhythm. True, the waltz - rhythm is *long* - short - short, whereas mine was short-short-*long*, but when a rhythm is repeated indefinitely you cannot always tell what it starts on. The similarity was there for suspicious minds to seize on. I therefore abandoned my rhythm for ever. I shall do nothing more with it. Plagiarism is a thing I have myself suffered from and no longer believe in.

## Amnesia on the Beach

**A**IRMAN, no more  
Be hollowed by the salt-sore  
Wash of your unnameable pain  
Into memory again.  
As in the wave's wake  
Your smoothed fingers take  
Curled weeds and curious pebbles for  
delight,  
Crowd into smooth day and ripple  
calm  
The solace of your sense-blind night  
And walk, a child upon the sands again.



*"Some rubbish about five thousand pounds being hidden under the floor-boards."*



## Man's Crowning Glory

THE gossip-writer of a London evening newspaper recently interviewed three representative barbers on the question whether it was really true that men were becoming as particular about their haircuts as women; and their answers made instructive reading.

One said that sometimes men would ask for the same kind of haircut as was worn by their favourite film-star, but that they usually had to be told that this wasn't possible. (In cases where the actor's hair-do involved the use of a toupée, presumably they were told that it wasn't advisable, or possibly even that it might be actionable.) This barber added kindly that the request generally originated from the customer's wife or girl-friend, not from the customer himself.

Another, the barber at the Guards' Club, said that he never went in for anything fantastic, but aimed at producing a gentlemanly appearance, which was a very proper answer to come from the Guards' Club. Officers with fantastic haircuts all over the parade would make the Trooping of the Colour look very strange. Incidentally, it would be interesting to know what answers would have been produced at some other clubs—the Arts Club, for instance, or the Savage.

But the third barber said the most interesting thing. In effect, he said that no matter what the customer asks for, the barber gives him the haircut he thinks he ought to have. Now everyone knows this to be true, but it is only seldom that a barber can be found to admit it; the rest dissemble their tyranny. In the case of the outright dictators, a haircut begins with a conversation on these lines—this barber

claimed, by the way, that he worked "without unnecessary conversation," but mark that word "unnecessary":

Barber. Short back and sides, sir?

Customer. Well, no; what I actually want you to do is leave it fairly long here, and then sort of taper it off, if you see what I mean, and just use the clipper things the teeniest bit up here.

Barber. I see, sir. Short back and sides.

If your barber is in the dissembling class, there is a very slight variation in the gambit:

Barber. Short back and sides, sir?

Customer. No, leave the sides altogether, and just unplat the longest bits on the back of my neck and even them off with a pair of shears.

Barber. Very good, sir.

The hair is then cut short at the back and sides, thinned a little at the top, combed forward in the fashion of the late Herr Hitler so that half an inch may be removed from the forelock, drenched in pomade, and brushed in such a manner that the customer, seeing his face in a mirror, imagines it to be a barrow-boy in the street outside.

This is by far the more common procedure.

There are two good reasons why it is unlikely that men will ever have the same say in their tonsorial destinies as women have. One is the diffidence that afflicts almost all men in the barber's chair, and the other is the reluctance of barbers to try anything new.

The diffidence arises because so many men really know so much more about how their hair ought to look than barbers do. The ideal, as I once used to explain to a barber—but in a bar, not a barber's shop—is that the customer should go out with his hair as nearly as possible as it was when he came in, only tidy. A man who has lived with his hair for, say, forty years obviously knows how this can be achieved, whereas a barber, who may well be seeing the man for the first time in his life, knows only how to produce a gentlemanly appearance. Yet I defy any man in England to put over the detailed instructions necessary with any hope at all of success. Before he is a quarter of the way through there will be a breathless hush in the shop, the obvious bookmaker who is having his bi-weekly shave in the corner chair will say "Cor, wants a lot, this geezer, don't 'e?" the barber will snigger, and the ominous word "Sissy" will tremble on the air. So there will

be nothing else for the poor customer to do but lie back in his chair with a sigh of resignation and murmur "All right. Short back and sides."

I once knew a man who thought he could explain everything if he drew a diagram of it on a piece of paper, but then the difficulties began even sooner. To start with, he never had a piece of paper in his pocket, and by the time it had been provided for him the whole shop was looking at him expectantly, as if he were Picasso about to dash off a woman in a fish hat. So, coward that he was, he used to pretend that he wanted to make a note of some likely horses for the afternoon, and the rest of the haircut was on normal lines.

As for the conservatism of barbers, it must be due to the difficulty of finding suitable subjects for experiment. My friend M. is talking of having his hair dyed green this summer; but for every one as brave as he there are a million who are just as wary as the Guards' Club barber of anything fantastic. I once went to a barber who said that the back of my neck came up lovely and asked if I could be available when he entered for some kind of Barbers' Championship; but that was only a straight short-back-and-sides job. If I needed a haircut and had the time to spare I should not mind being used as a barber's model for that; but I should think twice if he were going to create a new coiffure for me as women's hairdressers do, and give me a transverse parting or a mass of tight curls.

Indeed, how, and on whom, barbers learn their trade is a mystery that few of the general public ever learn. Do they graduate upwards from mops? Do they practise on hospital patients and experiment on schoolchildren? Perhaps it is because they have so little opportunity of broadening their scope that they hold so austere to their standard of the gentlemanly appearance. If it be true that men are going to demand the same individual approach and artistic originality as women, it looks as though a new career may be created for the hirsute. The danger is that those of us who really like our hair short back and sides may find ourselves left out in the cold.

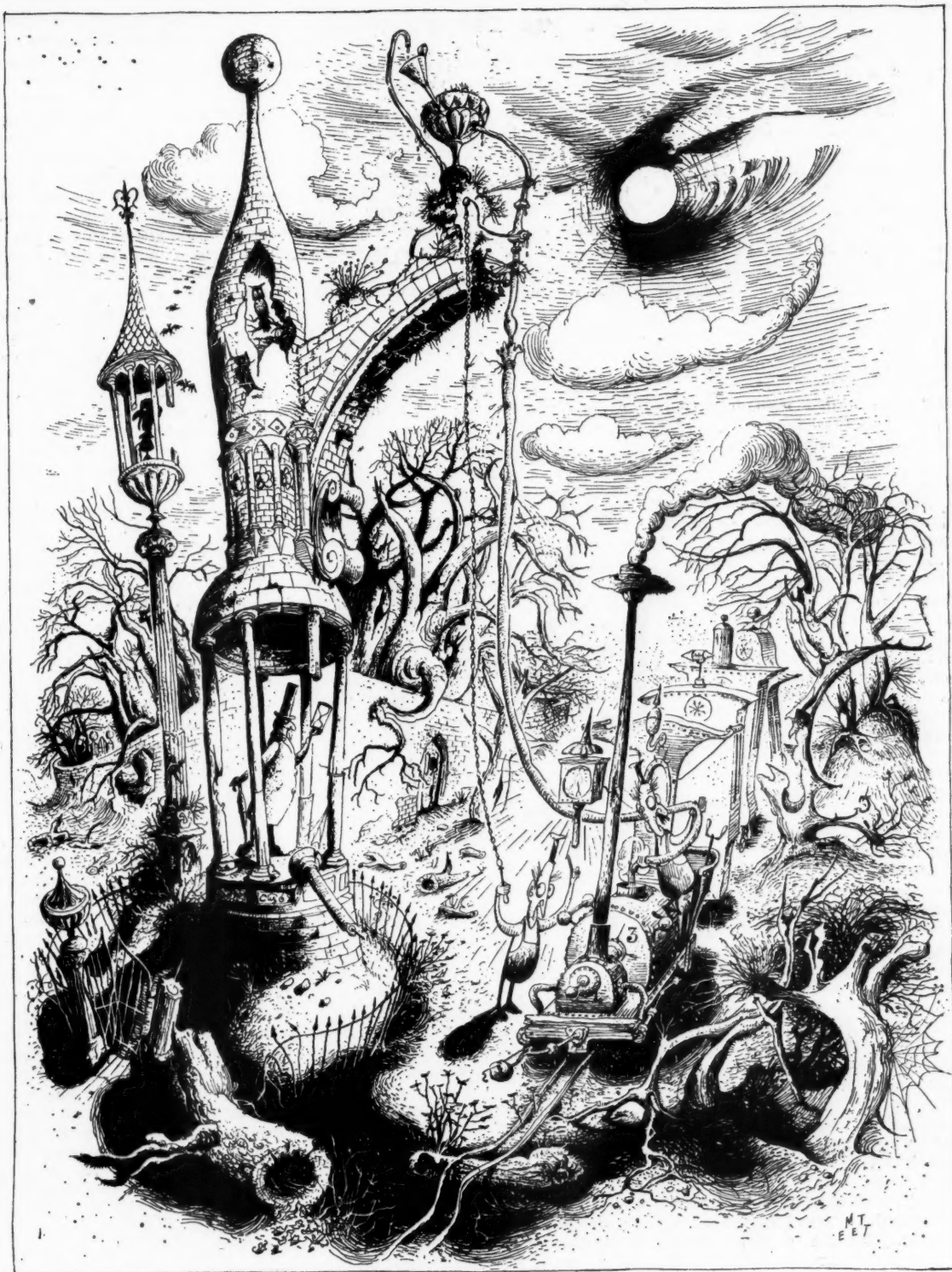
B. A. Y.



"If you must know I'm a Turkish bath attendant."

"The footwear manufacturers had a preliminary meeting among themselves immediately after their meeting with the Minister."—"Irish Times"

No change in the Irish situation.



ANNALS OF A BRANCH LINE

v—Locomotive Number 3 (Hector) at Mrs. Bristowe's Folly, now used as a water-tower

IT marvellously failed to rain at Stratford on St. George's Day, and with new paint in evidence and the river fringed with blossom the town was in rare shape for birthday celebrations for once not obscured by umbrellas. The sunny evening seemed made for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but the choice was happier than the production itself, which turned out to be an elaborate affair in which some of the simpler charms of the play are lost. It is, after all, a pastoral, a thing of the utmost lightness, and to ring up the curtain on a tremendously solid architectural perspective is surely an unfortunate beginning; the feeling that one has been trapped in a national monument, however imposing, is a poor sort of preparation for rustics and fairies. Mr. JAMES BAILEY, the designer, has been more successful with his wood. At first sight it rather fills the stage, but its writhing, haunted trees and tangled mat of flowers take hold of the imagination and its distances are mysterious enough to engulf anybody, even without the ill offices of *Puck*.

Like many modern producers, Mr. MICHAEL BENTHALL puts the emphasis on visual effect, often with striking results but sometimes at the expense, it seems to me, of Shakespeare. His fairies, for instance, glide through the Athenian grove in the movements of a ballet which is delightful in itself but too artful for the spirit of the play; in other words, they almost cease to be fairies. His use of lighting is very skilful indeed; but one would have welcomed a greater understanding in the speaking of the verse. Nevertheless the production has fine moments, and none better than the awakening of *Hermia*, whose terrified cries for *Lysander* as she strikes desperately into the wood are truly dramatic.

The lovers are somehow only moderately romantic. Unbecomingly wigged, I thought, Miss DIANA WYNYARD is not so much at home as *Helena* as in the two other parts she has triumphantly given us this season. Her performance is graceful but a little forced. Mr. HARRY ANDREWS continues

## At the Play

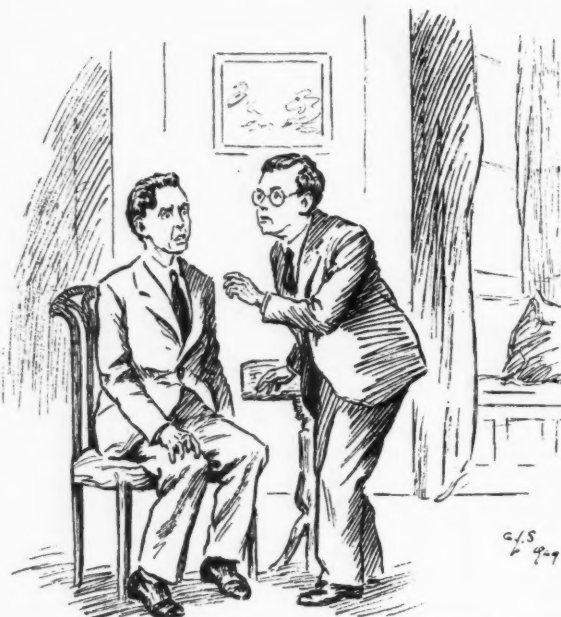
*A Midsummer Night's Dream* (STRATFORD)—*Twice Upon a Time* (ST. MARTIN'S)—*Variety* (PALLADIUM)

excellent, with a *Theseus* easily dominating the court. The rustics, whose interlude goes well, owe most to Mr. JOHN SLATER's pompous *Bottom* and to Mr. MICHAEL GWYNN, a melancholy *Flute* and a *Thisbe* gloriously compounded of all the skinny aunts of pantomime. As for those on the other side of the gossamer, Miss KATHLEEN MICHAEL and Mr. WILLIAM SQUIRE

appears that the son invented a valuable new bell-alloy in a Jap prison camp, where the go-getter accidentally killed him, there seems to be some hope of a play; but this material is frittered away in the tedious pursuit of the remorseful intruder by no less than three women, and in very amateur treatment of his sudden mental breakdown. To poor construction and patchy dialogue is added such a reckless disregard of probability that the cast is obliged to work feverishly to keep afloat at all. Mr. BEATTY has the best part, and makes the most of it, and Miss JOYCE HERON and Mr. EDWARD CHAPMAN, less favourably placed, put up a gallant struggle.

And at the Palladium, where a queue began to form at breakfast-time the day before he opened, DANNY KAYE is back again to practise his special wizardry twice-nightly: to dazzle us, enchant us, tie knots in us, and in short to do what he likes with us for six momentous weeks. This engaging young American with tousled hair and the sweet smile of innocence is now almost certainly the greatest one-man attraction on either side of the Atlantic, and for my part I am not surprised. Fortune seems to have held little back. He has a fine voice of freak range, knife-edged powers

of mimicry, plus real originality; but perhaps the most important thing about him is his genius for turning simple fooling into a kind of magic comedy. For an hour he held a huge audience spellbound with an astonishingly varied display: songs mildly sentimental, songs wildly funny, songs sung in eloquent gibberish and others sung at supersonic speed. Some of them, particularly the brilliant rag of the Russian producer, Stanislavsky, must have been above the heads of many of his listeners, but nobody cared. The accents of eastern Europe are still one of his chief delights. Everything he does is in good taste, and whatever he does you like him. ERIC



[Twice Upon a Time]

### DOCTOR IN SEARCH OF PATIENT'S MEMORY

Christopher Reagan . . . . . MR. ROBERT BEATTY  
Dr. Charles Stevens . . . . . MR. EDWARD CHAPMAN

make spritely division of the fairy throne and Mr. PHILIP GUARD is a swift and darting *Puck*. The incidental music comes from Mendelssohn.

It is customary on the stage to portray Midland business-men as rugged ironclads not standing much nonsense. About the only original note in Mr. TEDWELL CHAPMAN's *Twice Upon a Time*, at the St. Martin's, is that his bell-manufacturer permits a total stranger to take charge of both his home and his failing works on the strength of an uncanny knowledge of his affairs and of a mysterious link with his dead son. Thanks chiefly to some brisk go-getting by Mr. ROBERT



## At the Ballet

Ballets de Paris de Roland Petit  
(PRINCES)

Apparitions (COVENT GARDEN)

ROLAND PETIT and his company are back in London after their provincial tour. Their *Suite de Danses du Beau Danube*, a shortened version of Massine's *Le Beau Danube*, is more than a little weary and battle-stained; but it seems that no baptism of industrial England's smoke, soot and fog can quench the fiery *Carmen* of RENÉE JEANMAIRE. This ballet, which has proved very popular, repays a second visit. At first one is so shocked to hear BIZET's familiar music wrenched out of its context and to see, for example, *Don José* dancing to the music of *Carmen*'s famous Habanera, that enjoyment is stifled by irritation. At a second visit, however, knowing what to expect and with the bristles of one's indignation well sharpened and poised for action, one finds that, after all, *Carmen* is an extremely effective ballet of its kind. ROLAND PETIT's choreography is at times like an all-in wrestling match, at other times very weak; and for anyone who does not know the opera the character of *Escamillo*, shorn of its animal splendour and red-blooded vulgarity and cramped, as it is here, into a couple of minutes of mediocre comedy, would be incomprehensible. But luckily everyone knows *Carmen*; and the brilliant settings, ROLAND PETIT's passion-raddled *Don José* and, above all, RENÉE JEANMAIRE's tiger-cat *Carmen*, carry all before them. The realism is perhaps overdone, but if the bedroom-scene strikes one as unnecessary the last scene is full of authentic blood and sand. *Don José*, crazed with jealousy, stalks *Carmen* round and round the stage and finally stabs her just as the audience of the unseen bull-fight throw their hats into the air to signalize *Escamillo*'s victory. RENÉE JEANMAIRE dances *Carmen* at imminent danger to her life and limb. She was actually stabbed in the arm on the night we were present.

*Le Rêve de Léonor*, which involves Mademoiselle JEANMAIRE in still more all-in acrobatics, has choreography by FREDERICK ASHTON and music by BENJAMIN BRITTEN—his *Variations on a Theme by Frank Bridge*. *Léonor* evidently ate too many whipped creams and nougats for supper, and her sleep is consequently haunted by Freudian "ghoulies, ghosties and long-leggity beasts" from which we all pray to be delivered. Some of them,

with glaring yellow eyes, surround the purple-draped and four-times-larger-than-life effigy of the sleeping *Léonor*; the rest are let loose for RENÉE JEANMAIRE to wrestle with. She begins by pursuing her own tresses, which have become detached from her cranium and float about the stage. Then, transformed into a *Proserpine* of the utmost chic, she combats massed nougats and whipped creams. Finally, as an owl with a tawny feathered cloak, she sets about and slays a very Freudian black-bird. This ballet is quite good entertainment; but to have so many acrobatics in one programme is a little tiresome and we would rather see Mademoiselle JEANMAIRE in a ballet more worthy of her great talents.

*Apparitions*, CONSTANT LAMBERT's ballet on a romantic theme with choreography by FREDERICK ASHTON and music by LISZT, has been revived at Covent Garden. MARGOT FONTEYN (the *Woman in Ball Dress*), ROBERT HELPMANN (the *Poet*) and HAROLD TURNER (the *Hussar*) are in the rôles they created at Sadler's Wells before the war, and CECIL BEATON has redesigned his sets and costumes.

This is a highly successful revival and, to judge from the enthusiasm of the audience, forms a popular addition to the repertoire. The beetling Gothic study in which the *Poet* is revealed

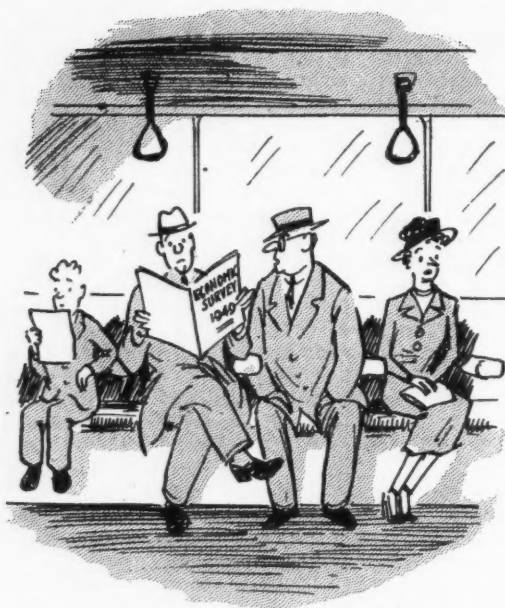
agonizing over the creation of a sonnet is just the kind of place that would make any sensitive soul begin "seeing things"; and the *Poet's* dose of laudanum and Mr. BEATON have between them certainly produced an eye-ful. In the ballroom scene the stage, covered with dancers in floating, filmy dresses of voluptuous colour, resembles a vast hot-house filled with costly, heavily-scented blossoms with MARGOT FONTEYN, the *idée fixe* of the *Poet's* fevered brain, as some rare black-and-white orchid. And, aided by Mr. CHENEY the electrician, Mr. BEATON has achieved a snowstorm with a gigantic crucifix floating in mid-air, followed by a monster funeral procession for the *idée fixe* of hooded monks in a purple of unbelievable opulence, as well as a living catafalque for the *Poet* himself of the same monks in the same luxurious hue. Keats—another romantic poet—once exclaimed "Now more than ever seems it rich to die," and that was at the sound of a mere nightingale. One wonders what he would have said had he seen this. CONSTANT LAMBERT conducted. D. C. B.

### Hot-Weather Note

"I saw the two shopping in Bond Street. Lady D— looked well in a light beige tweed suit, Sir B— wore a white carnation."—*Evening paper*



"I always sleep better at the Tate."



Hollowood

"Well, what is it that too many of are chasing too few of NOW?"

### Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Leader of the Jewish People

DR. CHAIM WEIZMANN, First President of Israel, tells the story of his life and career and of much else intimately concerned like them with the fortunes of Zionism in *Trial and Error* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 21/-). When he is recalling boyhood days spent in a little town of the Pripet Marshes, then, as now, infinitely remote from the highways of western civilization, his narrative has all the charm of distance and adventure, while his advance from the study at the age of eleven of the intricacies of the Law as laid down in the Babylonian Talmud to a position of world repute as a research chemist is an orthodox record of success through effort. Unfortunately for mere romance only a small share of his pages goes to his own forceful but unassuming self, and he is really telling the inner history of the struggle to found in Palestine a national home for the Jewish people. To that attempt he has brought a fervour of conviction, a sublimity of contempt for opposing conceptions even when passionately urged by leaders of his own faith, and a faculty for disregarding arguments or incidents developing unfortunately for his thesis that have made him a supreme advocate. The details of negotiations—Declarations, White Papers, Agreements—make dull enough reading at times, but it is dullness enlivened by the quick spark of near-malice or occasional clap of triumph. To-day most of what Dr. WEIZMANN has worked for has come to pass. A little more reasonable gratitude to this country would make the book pleasanter reading.

C. C. P.

#### Lost Past, Lost Future

Despite its thoughtful and forceful passages, and a tough characterization that seems crude, perhaps because its

subjects have few subtle aspects, *Road from Home* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 9/6) is a depressing novel. Essentially it is a sample of New Zealand's spiritual combat between "traditional Irish Catholic values and raw American newness." Mr. DAN DAVIN has seen enough of the world to know that such an issue is not peculiar to New Zealand. He chooses it, probably, as a crucial case, and the case he has most intimately observed. He tells, you feel, the story he is expected to tell: of pious old Junos with sottish Paycocks and squandering, incontinent children, the latter still destined in possessive, short-sighted, maternal dreams for the glory of the priesthood or the perfect marriage. Pages of religious ceremonial alternate with football matches, cinemas and petty intrigues spitefully commented on by their onlookers: the Black Protestant defiantly married by the young Papist proving as bad a lot and coming to as bad an end as the heart of devout mother-in-law could desire. Mr. DAVIN has infinite patience with his unprepossessing crowd. Only when the last of the immigrant bards is buried by a community now wholly stripped of cultural resources, does he stress, and memorably, what that passing means.

H. P. E.

#### Brother, Sing

MR. GEOFFREY GRIGSON's anthology *Poetry of the Present* (PHENIX HOUSE, 10/6) is avowedly one of poets "of the 'Thirties and After." As it is impossible in a short space to pay critical attention to a collection which includes the work of thirty-six poets ranging from Drummond Allison to Vernon Watkins it seems fair to observe that as a representative anthology of the coteries and the schools it is sound, comprehensive, and offers specimens of the work of at least half a dozen indisputable poets. Furthermore, Mr. GRIGSON's anthology is one of the first to summarize—roughly—where poetry stands to-day after the ten years' publishing difficulties since 1939 have more or less ended. With his choice one has only the quarrels one has with any anthologist: personal favourites omitted; those one is not inclined to (to quote Hudibras) included. With his critical introduction it is another matter. In his analysis of the various influences of the schools "since Auden" he seems to this writer to indulge in print in the kind of talk that literary-minded undergraduates openly despise and secretly admire. He has expressed this himself in his own term of "profound pretentiousness." Schools of poetry bear much the same relationship to poetry that ordinary, not to mention public, schools do to life: they influence one. Mr. GRIGSON's introduction would seem to suggest that the poets are never out of school—haven't grown up—and (of such youngsters as Derek Stanford) never will grow up. The truth is that all poets are influenced by those who went before them, as by their contemporaries; and that good poets weld together these influences as a part merely of all that has happened in the Universe of which they become aware. In *Poetry of the Present* one is happy to think that there is the work of more than one such poet. It is perhaps as well that lack of space forbids one to say more.

R. C. S.

#### A Tale of Two Americas

When there are three maiden sisters, two of them still quite young, living modestly together in a small country town, and when a brisk young man invades their quietude from a more sophisticated world, it is pretty obvious what sort of things are likely to happen. But if Mr. HUGH MACLENNAN has been content to start from a situation

which may be called commonplace, there is nothing commonplace about the drama which he develops from it. *The Precipice* (CRESSET PRESS, 12/6) has all the distinction that integrity of vision, sureness of intention, a delicate perception of the finer shades of character and craftsmanship of a very high order can bestow. It is, moreover, something more than a story of personal relations and private emotions. In the stresses which result from the marriage of Lucy Cameron, child of a prim Canadian community, itself the derivative of a Calvinistic Scotland, with Stephen Lassiter, typical product of a cosmopolite America intent on the quick realization of material well-being, Mr. MACLENNAN has sought to illustrate the discords between two traditions; and the contrast between Grenville, half asleep by its lake, and a New York feverish in activity, is vividly pointed. Still, it is the individual that counts in the long run; Mr. MACLENNAN never lets the general issue swamp the particular. The three sisters, with their identical pedigrees, are as different as can be; Lucy's puritanism is less than her humanity; and with Stephen's hedonistic arrivisme are mingled rarer elements. What gives *The Precipice* its final savour is its refreshing sanity. F. B.

### A Shining Light

"Alfred is dreadfully embarrassed with women alone, for he entertains at one and the same moment a feeling of almost adoration for them, and an ineffable contempt." Jane Carlyle wrote that about Lord Tennyson, and many of her intellectual contemporaries, including the founder of Girton, who is the subject of HESTER BURTON's Victorian biography, *Barbara Bodichon* (JOHN MURRAY, 16/-), must have been tempted to take the adoration of their particular Alfreds, and let the contempt fly, or to let their blue stockings sag unhappily about their ankles. But Madame Bodichon who, as Barbara Leigh Smith, had been brought up to believe in Liberty, Justice, Honesty and Charity, whose father was shrewd, unworldly and a fierce righter of wrongs, inherited his virtues and added her own charms. She was an artist as well as a reformer, and drew unflattering sketches of herself. Before she, and one of her greatest friends, attempted the retrial of Princess Ida's experiment which was to result in the founding of Girton, she had read a paper on Women's Suffrage, arranged for the Marylebone swimming baths to be opened for women, collected petitions for the Married Women's Property Bill, attended slave auctions with indignation, married Dr. Bodichon, made friends with Rossetti, George Eliot, William Allingham and a great proportion of the important people of her day, which lasted from 1827 to 1891. Mrs. BURTON's book is a eulogy, but mercifully the long tale of admiration is broken by many little sidelights on the people who worked with her heroine, and the result is very well worth reading. B. E. B.

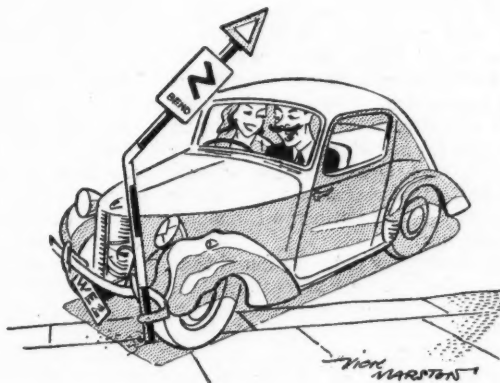
### E'en in Our Ashes

"I don't know whether to dive in or stay on the bank," wrote ALUN LEWIS to his wife when he sailed for India in 1942. He foresaw that the "insatiable humanist and restless writer" in him would "abandon neutrality and seek in India as in England the true story and the proper ending." As the result of this quest, the young poet—he was killed at twenty-eight—does for his war very much what the veteran C. E. Montague did for his. In *The Green Tree* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 8/6) prints six short stories of the calibre of "Fiery Particles"; and letters to the author's wife and parents combine a vivid picture of the clutch of

circumstance with a writer's notes on his trade. "I think I can do my duty to thought, word and life," hazarded LEWIS. The triple tension is evident. An ex-schoolmaster who would gladly have met his India and Burma as "anything but a soldier," he was a good soldier; and he quietly shelved the chance of a staff appointment to remain with his men. Professor A. L. Rowse rightly sees his indubitable genius as released by love and war. Peace might have broken the man who wrote of the Nightmare Death-in-Life that confronts every sensitive thinker: "Acceptance seems so spiritless, protest so vain. In between the two I live." H. P. E.

### An Important Reprint

In spite of the sensation it made when it came out, *The Green Carnation* is almost unknown to this generation of readers, because Mr. ROBERT HICHENS generously withdrew it as soon as Oscar Wilde, the chief target for its satire, found himself in trouble. It is far too good a piece of writing, and far too acute a commentary on the cults of the 'nineties, to be out of print so long, and now THE UNICORN PRESS has made it available at the cost of an eight-and-sixpence that couldn't conceivably be regretted. Mr. HICHENS adds a preface in which, looking back with mild surprise to the sudden fame this initial work brought him at twenty-nine, he describes how a chance meeting in Egypt with E. F. Benson, younger than himself but fresh from the triumph of "Dodo," drove him to authorship; and how, though *The Green Carnation* was at first published anonymously, both Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas guessed the secret and sent him comic telegrams of congratulation. The book guys them mercilessly in their own manner, and lesser men might not have taken it so well. But its impertinence is matched by genuine brilliance. To produce a few paragraphs of synthetic Wilde conversation is perhaps not difficult, but to sustain it in something very like the authentic vein through a whole short novel is an extraordinary feat. The story of the two friends visiting the preposterous country cottage of a lion-hunting London hostess is still deliciously funny, and the gilded nonsense they talk is all the better for being set against the crisp normality of a young Service widow who has strayed into the party. What is extremely interesting is that Mr. HICHENS seems to have got in first with the novel of heartless wit which a whole school of English writers, from Firbank onwards, was later to cultivate. E. O. D. K.



"For a split second I thought you were going to miss it."





*"I must go back to the hotel and change these shoes—the others don't hurt in the same places."*

## Calories and Cars

MUCH has been said about a popular discrepancy in the use of the word "calorie." A friend of mine insists, and I agree with him, that according to Mr. "Ohm-Sweet-Ohm" Watt, under whom he and I studied such things, a calorie is a measure of heat. It was a ludicrously small measure, I think, and I forget how one gauged it or why, but the point is that that was how it was regarded. My dictionary supports this view, quoting the Latin word "calor," meaning heat.

But as we grew older we found that once again the schoolmasters had deceived us. It now appeared that a calorie was food. So many calories a week is good for a miner, so many for a lance-corporal; so many for a herbalist, and so on. One collects, therefore, that a calorie is not warmth at all. Hot food contains no more of

them than cold. (At least, I don't think so. The last thing I want to do is to put into anyone's head the idea that we should be healthier and happier if we lived on curried horseradish and tea, with plenty of mustard and chili sauce.) One supposes then that Mr. Watt and others of his persuasion have long since retired into an ignominious obscurity, for surely no science master can hope to deceive all the boys for ever. Such, at any rate, is the burden of my friend's remarks, but I confess to a small doubt.

It was six years ago, when I was travelling abroad for the Government, that my food was first described to me in terms of calories. I learned, to my alarm, that I could look forward to a regimen of (if I have the figures right) five thousand calories a day. We were practising for a military fixture in North Central Burma at the time and

the prospect was revolting, until it was explained to me that my rations had been so cunningly devised that I was getting very little to eat but enough nourishment for a horse. (I dare say this has a familiar ring to you, but it was new to us then.) We discovered later that these allegedly huge rations were not thought capable of keeping the human frame working efficiently for more than two and a half months—an estimate that was not refuted by experience.

Since then I have heard that a bottle and a half of gin contains as many calories and therefore food as an ordinary day's rations, but I find that accurate research into this is prohibited by cost.

We who sat at his feet in those far-off days have always looked on Mr. Watt with a certain affection and would not like him to be discredited.

It was he who showed us how to squash a paraffin tin for salvage by roasting it over a gas-ring and then sousing it with cold water; though it is true, if sad, that very early in the succeeding holidays I discovered that the tins used for this amusing trick were dummies, being made specially thin. I regret to say that this type of hoax was characteristic of the whole system of Stinks, though I prefer to think that O.-S.-O. Watt was a reluctant party to it.

He was a man of iron, or perhaps porcelain. Once we saw him keep his fingers on a pair of electric power terminals for some seconds before announcing calmly that the current was turned on. We were young and had not seen this kind of thing before, and I think a certain scepticism was justifiable in us. The shriek that rang through the room a moment later made Mr. Watt spin round as suddenly as though he had caught his fingers in a lightning conductor. He recovered his poise quickly, however, when he saw that it was only the Dram of Drambuie, D.S.O. ("Quickie" Dram, as we knew him then). Mr. Watt took his scream to be one of concurrence and thanked him gravely.

Mr. Watt taught us all about other strange things, such as the Weston Differential Gear, an affair of endless chains with which, at the cost of an almost unbelievable amount of exercise, it was found possible to raise the manager of Golightly Limited's Rangoon office up to the level of his own stool. What subject was this: Hydrostatics—Electricity—Geography? It can hardly have been Chemistry or Warmth and was in the wrong room for Biology.

He is perhaps chiefly remembered, however, for his originality as a motorist. It was his practice to immobilize his elaborately equipped motor-car by plucking the gear lever out by the roots and taking it away with him. Very few intending car thieves, he argued, carry a skeleton gear lever.

It happened that one evening we were engaged in a particularly intricate piece of research. By means of a heavy and expensive piece of machinery, designed apparently for the purpose, we had snapped utterly in two a little cast-iron rod about the size of a pencil. I forget whether this evolution was intended to test the rod or the machine, or to illustrate some point in a lecture on Light or Sound, but the point is unimportant. It was hardly over when we were interrupted by a breathless messenger who summoned our instructor to the telephone. On his return he told us, pleasantly apologetic,

that he must leave us and would we please disperse in a quiet and orderly manner?

It seemed that in the morning he had been in London and, through a fault in the switchboard, his motor-car had broken down in St. James's Square. The garage to which he had entrusted the gear lever now reported that when they switched on the engine the only result was a continuous blast from the horn and would he kindly tell them how to stop it?

"It is the Watt alarm device," he explained, "which I forgot to tell them

about. The actuating switch can be worked only by a specially adapted tooth-brush handle that I carry in my pocket. If I leave for London immediately it should be possible to get there before the battery is completely run down."

This, my first introduction to original thought in applied science, inspired in me, for one, a loyalty that has persisted. This loyalty now insists that Ohm-Sweet-Ohm Watt was right. As far as I am concerned a calorie is, and will remain, a unit of the slightest possible warmth.

## Heart-Cry from Troy

**M**OVE up a little, Menelaus,  
please,  
The sharp end of your spear  
Is sticking in my ear  
And I am very ill at ease.

Who thought of this contraption,  
anyhow?  
Athenes? Yes, she would!  
I'd like to know what good  
We're doing, sitting in this cow.

Perhaps it is a horse. I do not care  
To argue in this heat.

Here, you! Get off my feet;  
Lean back, Odysseus. Give me  
air!

Your elbow, Neoptolemus, is hard;  
Remove it from my eye,  
Or later we shall try  
Our skill at arms, with nothing  
barred.

O grim device! O idiot resource!  
A hundred packed in here!  
Hold off, I'm feeling queer.  
Is there a doctor in the horse?



## Mid-Morning Train

"NORA. Nora. This one's empty."

"No, it isn't, there's a—"  
"Only one, and he's reading the paper. Oo, these doors are stiff! Nora, can you—Oh, thank you so much!"

"Terribly kind. So sorry, I'm afraid that was your foot . . . Back or facing, Betty?"

"Facing, because I had that fish for breakfast. Ring the bell, dear; I'm dying for coffee."

"I shall have tea, I think."

"I wonder if they have any biscuits."

"They have them sometimes."

"I shall have some if they have. Now then, where was I?"

"Before you begin, dear—shouldn't we put the bags on the rack?"

"I'm not budging. There's only one stop before—"

"I think we should. We don't want—Oh, that's terribly sweet of you, really!"

"Thanks most awfully! There. Now we can spr-r-read out . . . Lovely. Well, Nora dear. I'm the last person to—well, you know me. But when a woman like that—"

"What did Dorothy think?"

"Oh, well—Dorothy. I mean, Dorothy was the one who—Oh, yes, steward, thank you. I shall have a pot of coffee."

"Tea, please. What? Oh, a pot, of course. And have you any biscuits? Oh, good. Biscuits, then."

"Me, too. Thank you . . . After all, if Dorothy was going to—Oh, steward.

Steward! I meant to ask, are they just plain biscuits? Dry things?"

"You know, steward. Just round ones. They are? Oh."

"Oh. Just coffee, then."

"And just tea."

"Oh, I'll have tea, I think, if there aren't any biscuits . . . Well, now, on the Sunday morning—What's the matter, Nora?"

"Steward! I just thought—Oh, was that your foot, I'm terribly sorry—I just thought we might as well—Oh, steward, we may as well have one pot for two, not two pots. Thank you."

"Nora dear, I think you've shut the gentleman's paper in the door."

"Oh, I do apologize. Let me—Oh, you've done it . . . so sorry! Go on, dear."

"Yes. Well, you know what she's always said about a certain person? Well, now, on the Sunday morning—"

"Interrupting you a minute—do you think the bags are jutting rather?"

"Oh, they always jut on those silly racks. You mustn't be nervy, dear."

"No, but just to be on the safe side. We could put them back on the—Oh, would you really? That's really terribly kind!"

"Terribly grateful. So sweet!"

"There! Go on, Betty."

"Yes, I must tell you, because it was quite incredible. She came rushing into the morning-room like a mad thing, shouting for Edgar to—Oh, look, here's the tray. Lovely."

"Lovely. I'll take it."

"No, I'm nearest. If you could move the—Oh, that's frightfully kind of you; if you could, that would be simply—Oh, Nora, look! He's found us some sweet biscuits after all. That's lovely!"

"Lovely!"

"Now we can really—Oh, steward. Steward! . . . Oh, steward, I think as you've found these lovely biscuits I'll have coffee after all, if that wouldn't be a terrible nuisance? So that will be a pot of coffee for one, and a pot of tea for one; so you'd better take this tray back and bring two more. He can leave the biscuits, can't he, then he'll only—"

"Yes, leave the biscuits, steward. That will save you—can you reach the tray, or should I—? Oh, how truly kind of you! Thank you so much! Very kind!"

"Most! I'm afraid we—"

"Oh, please don't bother—the steward will take it along the corridor—"

"You really mustn't trouble to—"

"Oh, well—if you're going in any case. It's terribly sweet!"

"Good-bye, then."

"Good-bye, and thank you so much."

"What a nice man! Is he taking the tray all the way? Can you see?"

"No, the steward's gone off with it . . . He's just standing in the corridor. I think he's tearing up his newspaper."

"How peculiar . . . Well, now, I was telling you about—shut the door, dear—I was telling you about . . ."

J. B. B.



"Quit this quick-march stuff—give 'em 'Sweet and Low'."

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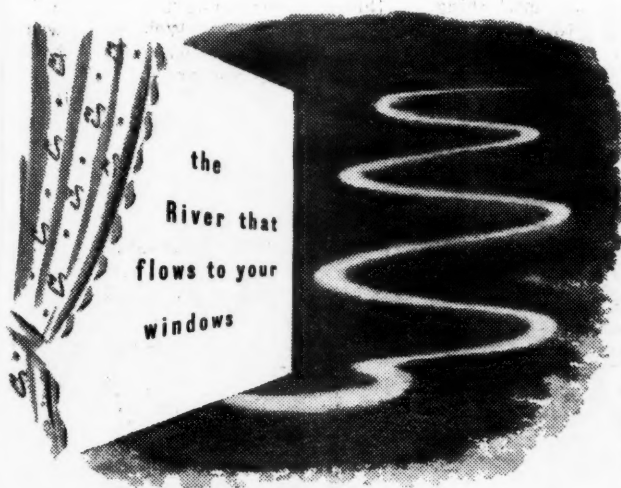
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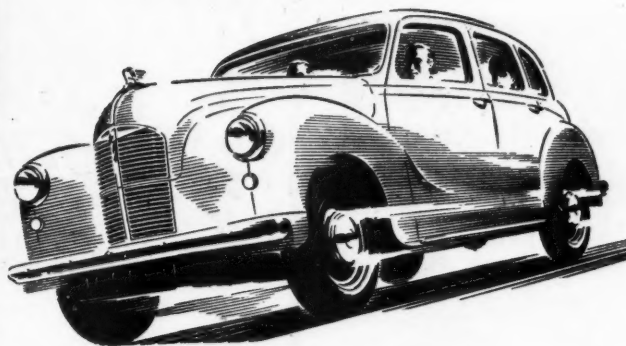
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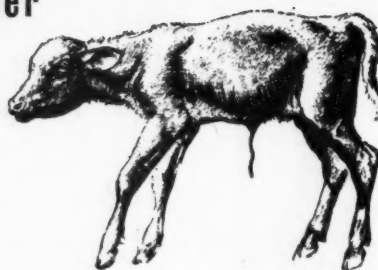
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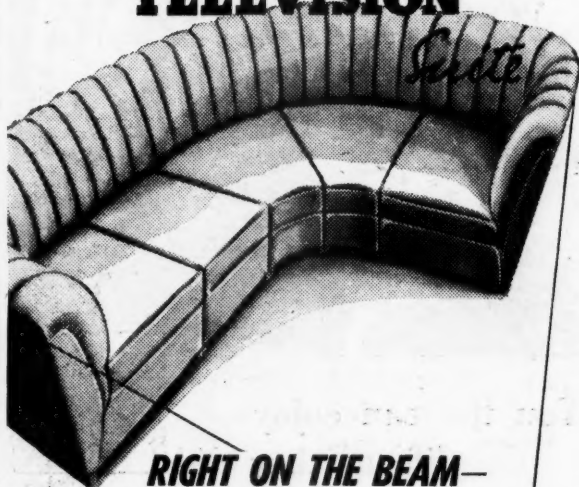


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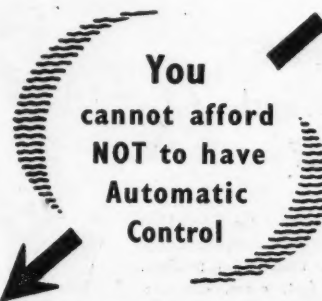


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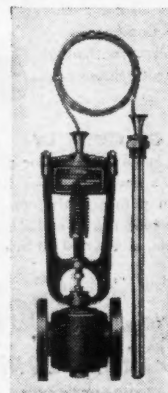
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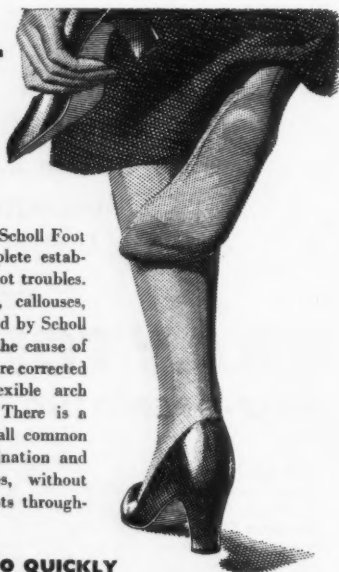
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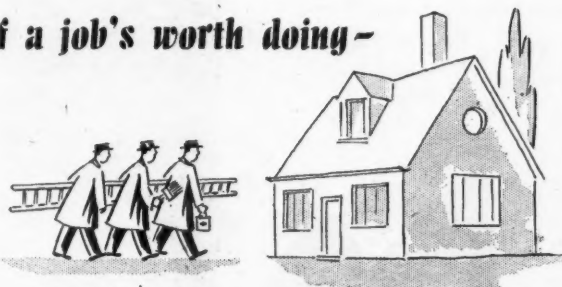
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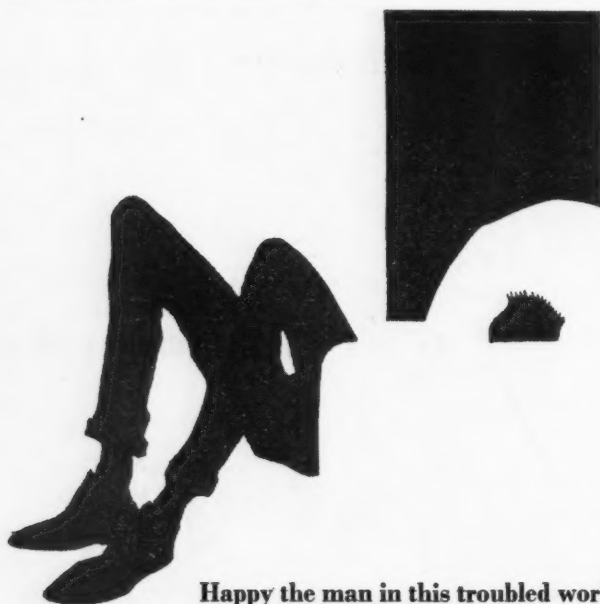
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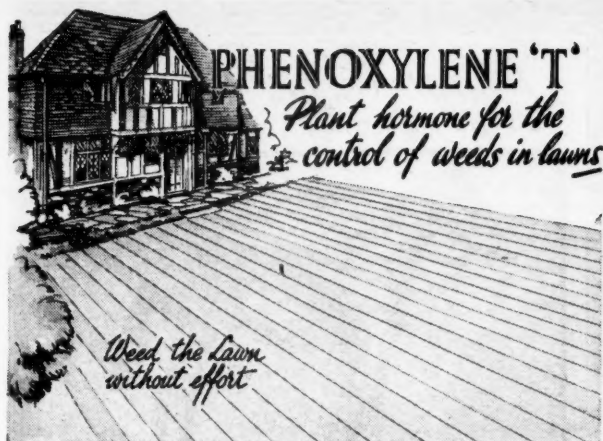
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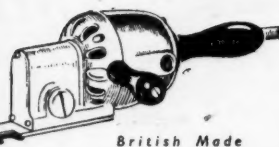
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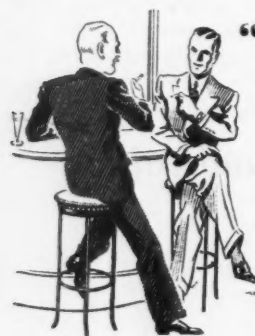
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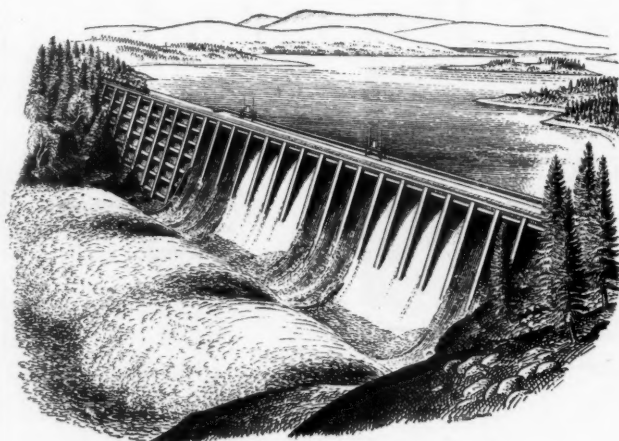
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